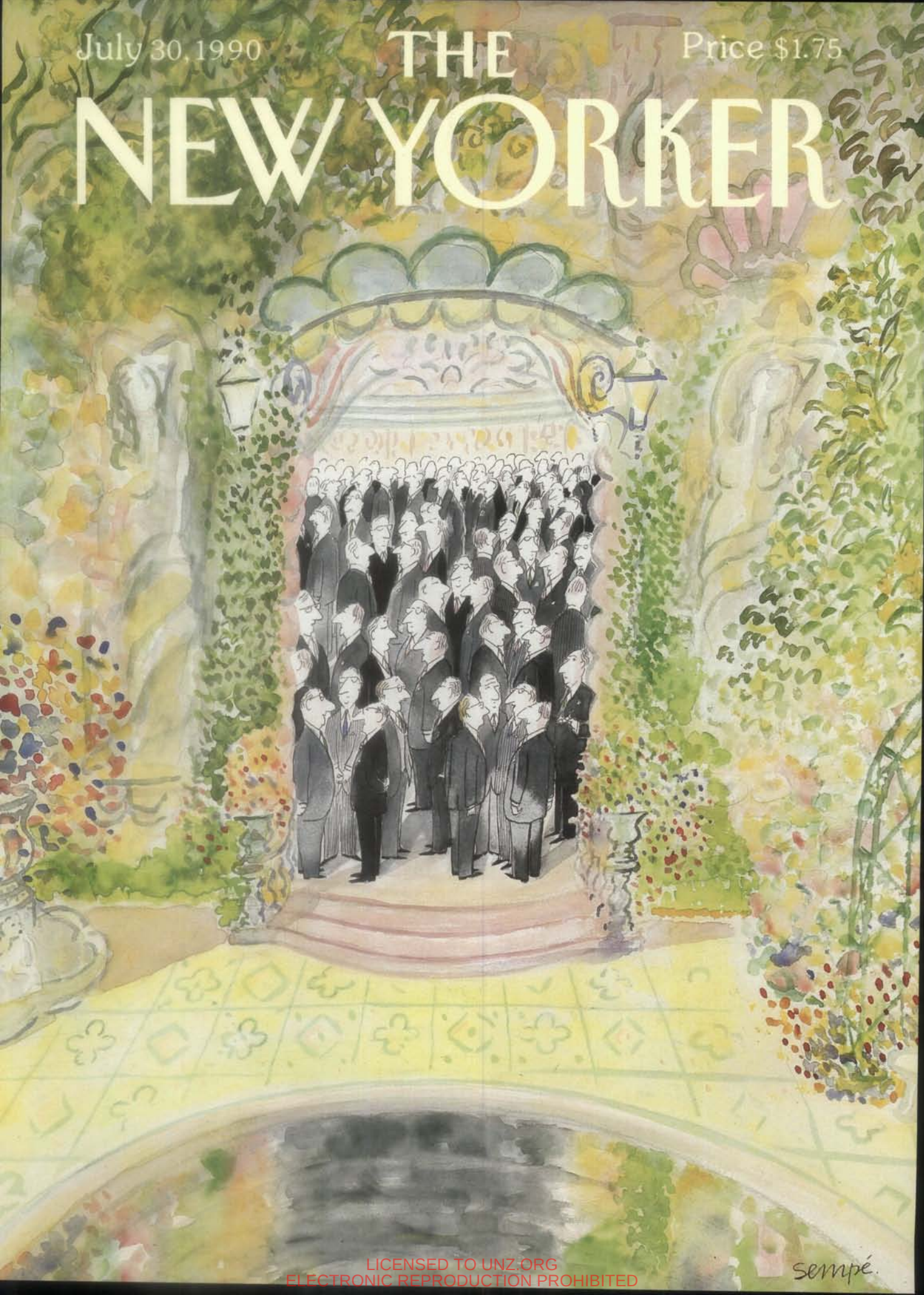


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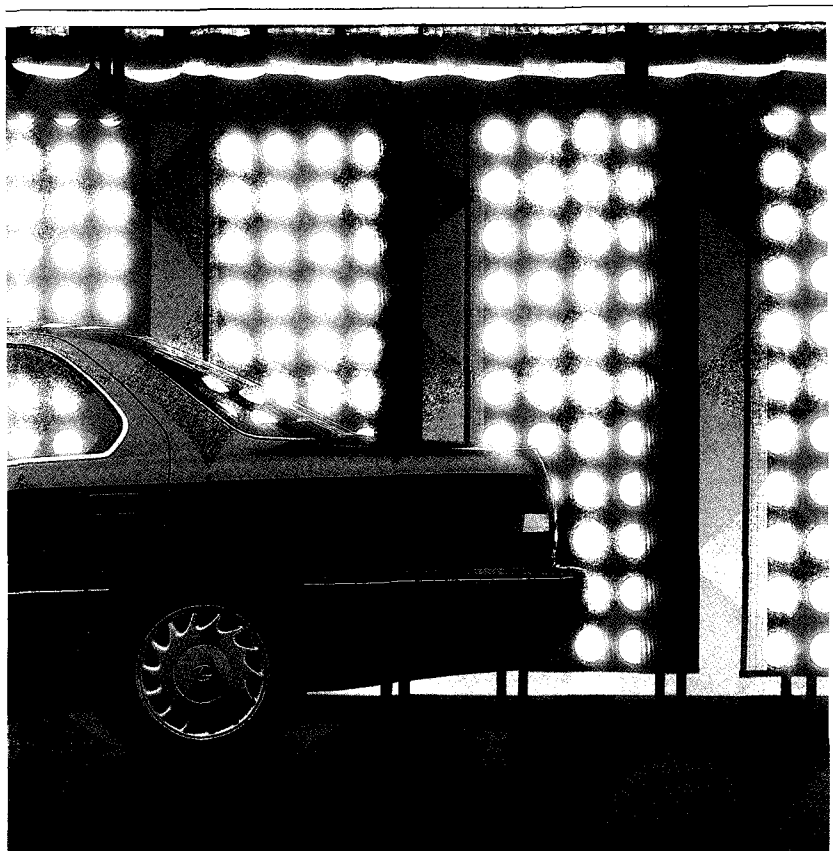




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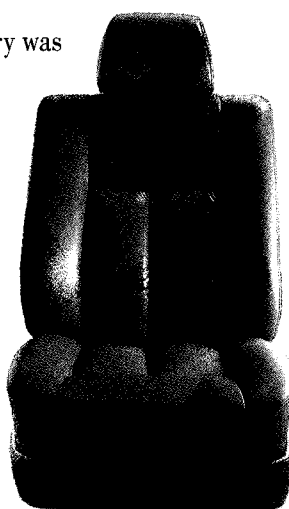


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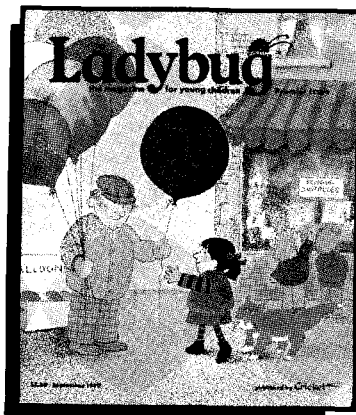
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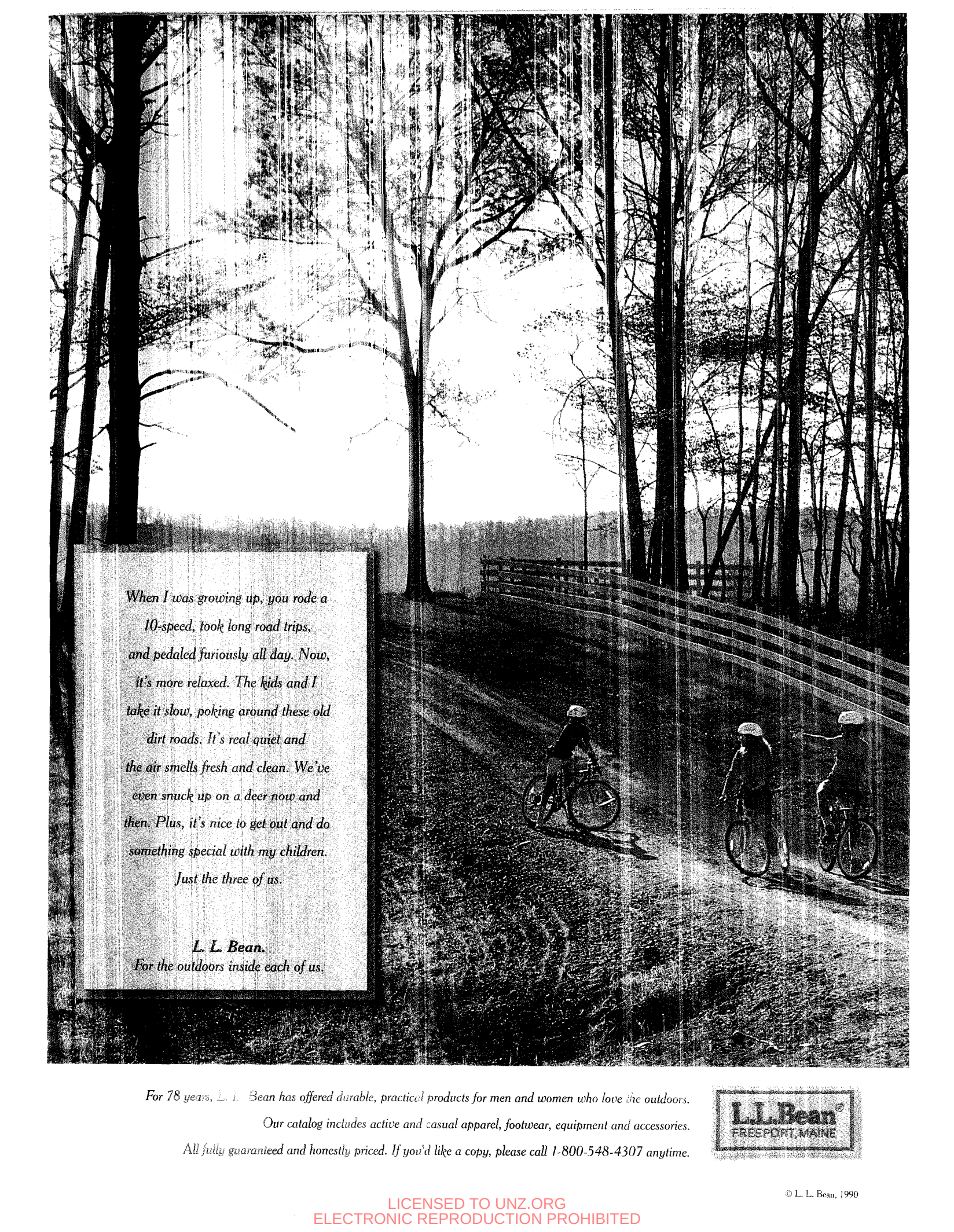
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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

WE like our softball sort of macho, yet sort of self-indulgent and confessional. So on opening day of the Broadway Show League's softball season, some months back, we showed up at Diamond 1 in the Heckscher Ball Fields to watch *A Few Good Men* play *A Chorus Line*.

The game of softball actually figures in "*A Few Good Men*"—not significantly, perhaps, but more prominently than it does in "*Les Misérables*," say. There are lines in the court-martial play like "Sam, my softball team's playing Bethesda Medical tomorrow. I can't be concerned with anything right now," and "Is there anyone in this command that you don't either drink or play softball with?" And an early scene includes this exchange: "I hope... you practice law better than you play softball." "Unfortunately... I don't do anything better than I play softball." To us, shopping around for a particular team to follow, this seemed as good a reason as any to follow *A Few Good Men*; but there are, of course, plenty of teams to choose from.

The Show League, which claims the field on any Thursday that the weather is fine (games start at 11:30, 1:30, and 3:30), isn't, strictly speaking, made up of Broadway-show personnel: some of the teams hail from Off Broadway. Moreover, a show doesn't actually have to be on the boards in order for its team to play. Last week, a combined team called Lend Me Jake's Circle played *Black and Blue*, in spite of the fact that "Lend Me a Tenor" and "The Circle" have both closed, while "Jake's Women" never even made it to New York. "We try to accommodate everyone," Don Koehler, the League's commissioner, told us. Mr. Koehler, who works as a stage doorman at the Booth when he isn't keeping an eye on things at the Heckscher Fields, admits that "Kiss of the Spider Woman," which makes up part of the team called Spider Money, is "stretching way Off Broadway—all the way to Purchase." But, Mr. Koehler explains, "John Rubinstein is such an enthusiast. We try to figure out a way to fit people in." In the case of Jake's Women, the decisive factor proved to be baseball shirts. "They already had them made up," Mr. Koehler says, "and we thought, what the hey?"

In this Thursday's playoff, *A Few Good Men*, which defeated Local B183 (the union of ticket-takers, ushers, and doormen) last week, will play Phantom. The contest will begin at 1:30.

NEW THIS SEASON

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedule and ticket information.)
ASPECTS OF LOVE—Andrew Lloyd Webber's latest extravaganza, based on David Garnett's frail 1955 novel of the same title, aspires to good taste and sophistication (it's about artists and theatre folk rather than cats or trains) but ends up being a sort of monument

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to vulgarity. The combination of Garnett's triviality and Lloyd Webber's pretentiousness produces something so empty it implodes. (Reviewed in our issue of 4/23/90.) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

BY AND FOR HAVEL—A pair of one-acters in revival. "By"—**AUDIENCE**—is based on an episode that occurred when Václav Havel had a menial job in a brewery; "for"—**CATASTROPHE**—is Samuel Beckett's poetic tribute to Havel when he was in prison. Together, they make an evening that is both comic and stirring. With Kevin O'Connor and Lou Brockway. (3/19/90) (John Houseman Studio Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.)

CAT ON A HOT TIN ROOF—As Maggie the Cat, Kathleen Turner seems in desperate straits in this limp and hapless revival of Tennessee Williams' most playable family melodrama. (4/2/90) (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220. Closes Aug. 1.)

CITY OF ANGELS—Larry Gelbart, dramatist; Cy Coleman, composer; Billy Byers, arranger; James Naughton and Gregg Edelman, leading men; and Michael Blakemore, director, are all in top form in this sharp, jokey musical satire about Hollywood in the forties. The plot concerns the making of a private-eye movie (and the unmaking of its author). The spectacular settings and costumes were designed by Robin Wagner and Florence Klotz and lighted by Paul Gallo. (12/25/89) (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 246-0102.)

THE ENGLISH ONLY RESTAURANT—A musical farce by Silvio Martínez Palau (book), Sergio García-Marruz (score), and Saul Spangenberg (lyrics). (Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. 354-1293. Closes July 29.)

FALSETTOLAND—This latest installment of a three-part cantata by William Finn (music and lyrics) is a sequel to "In Trousers" and "March of the Falsettos." Mr. Finn's story presents a number of new elements (among them a bar mitzvah in the hospital room of a

man who is dying of AIDS) before dissolving in its own syrup. The music sounds agreeable enough, and the performance goes smoothly, under the direction of James Lapine; Chip Zien is very good as a benign psychiatrist. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Closes Aug. 12.)

A FEW GOOD MEN—"Mister Roberts" meets "The Mary Tyler Moore Show." Aaron Sorkin's military-courtroom drama treats issues such as justice, honor, loyalty, and morality with the slick, facile smugness of a half-hour comedy series, but the performances, by an ace cast under Don Scardino's direction, are wonderful. (11/27/89) (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

FOREVER PLAID—Stuart Ross's loving, tongue-in-cheek salute to the "guy groups" of the fifties is a real treat. The performances of Jason Graae, Stan Chandler, David Engel, and Guy Stroman (as the Plaids, a close-harmony group snuffed out in the prime of life and brought back to earth for a single evening) are so deadpan, and the songs (arranged by James Raitt, who also accompanies on piano) are rendered at such a heightened pitch of musical good faith, that only from Ross's script and choreography would you know the thing is a parody. Bring your mom. Hell, bring the whole family. (Steve McGraw's, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400.)

FURTHER MO'—This lively, touching, and brilliantly performed small-scale musical, set in a New Orleans vaudeville theatre in 1927, is a real gem. Written by Vernel Bagneris (who also stars), it uses blues singing (mostly quite recherché songs) to say something about the plight of the black entertainer in American history and culture. (Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. 475-5120.)

GRAND HOTEL—The dazzling imagination of Tommy Tune's direction and choreography and the dazzling scenery by Tony Walton almost make up for the inner vacancy of this show (except for a glorious, eccentric dance by Michael Jeter), but not quite. The story and characters are skimpy and the music is undistinguished. Nevertheless, there isn't a boring moment. (11/27/89) (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-0102.)

THE GRAPES OF WRATH—This stage adaptation (by Frank Galati, who also directed) is the most truly adult version of Steinbeck's novel to date. It appeals to the mind rather than to the emotions; all the same, there's a cumulative effect. Don't go expecting to see John Ford or "Balm in Gilead," but expect to leave feeling as if you had. With Lois Smith and Gary Sinise. (4/2/90) (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

GYPSY—This revival of the great Sondheim-Styne-Laurents-Robbins musical (directed by Arthur Laurents himself) is so delightful—and the cast (led by Tyne Daly, Crista Moore, and Jonathan Hadary) so engaging—that we think anyone would be happier for having seen it. One suggestion: don't applaud when Mama Rose comes down the aisle (you'll drown out the first number). Trust Broadway; you'll have ample time to welcome Miss Daly when she mounts the steps and delivers her first onstage line. Starting July 30, Linda Lavin takes over from Miss Daly. (12/4/89) (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 246-0102.)

LETTICE & LOVAGE—The marvellous Maggie Smith plays Lettice Douffet, a freewheeling guide to England's stately homes, and the elegant Margaret Tyzack plays a reprimanding envoy sent by Lettice's employers in Peter Shaffer's merry comedy about an unlikely friendship and other matters. Paxton Whitehead and Bette Henritze are effective in supporting roles. Michael Blakemore was the director. (4/9/90) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.)

PHILADELPHIA, HERE I COME!—Brian Friel's wonderfully funny and touching play about a young man from a small Irish village on the eve of his departure for America really holds up in Paul Weidner's beautiful production. Grab this one: revivals this good don't come around often. With Ciaran O'Reilly, Patrick Fitzgerald, and Pauline Flanagan. (South Street Theatre, 424 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

THE PIANO LESSON—August Wilson's new drama, the fourth in his series chronicling the black-American experience in the twentieth century, is set in Pittsburgh in 1936. In its exquisite writing and over-all structure (involving



Jason Graae, Stan Chandler, David Engel, and Guy Stroman in "Forever Plaid"

the conflict over a piano that figures hauntingly and intricately in one family's history) the play resembles "Joe Turner's Come and Gone" more than "Fences." Wilson takes refuge in an overly mystical and melodramatic ending, but there are some great scenes—even if the subtle ensemble acting in Lloyd Richards' production is thrown out of balance by an excessive performance by Charles S. Dutton. (4/30/90) (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 582-4022.)

PRELUDE TO A KISS—Craig Lucas's entertaining romantic comedy slips into fantasy when an old man kisses a bride at her wedding. Barnard Hughes is the old man, Mary-Louise Parker is the bride, and Timothy Hutton is the groom. (3/26/90) (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 944-9450.)

THE ROTHSCHILDS—A revival of the 1970 musical by Jerry Bock (score), Sheldon Harnick (lyrics), and Sherman Yellen (book), with a sixteen-member cast, led by Mike Burstyn. (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330.)

SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION—You're best off knowing nothing about the new John Guare play, other than that it represents a perfect meeting of the playwright, director Jerry Zaks, and actress Stockard Channing. Out of a true story—one apparently about celebrity and Good Samaritanism—Guare has fashioned a wistful comedy about race, class, money, imagination, collective conscience, individual psyche, and the impulse toward art. What more do you want? (6/25/90) (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

SMOKE ON THE MOUNTAIN—This loving satire of old-time gospel music, set in 1938, is perfectly delightful. Written by Connie Ray (who also performs, along with six other versatile actor-musicians), it re-creates a Saturday-night service at a small church in rural North Carolina, where a family of more or less devout gospel singers have been invited to appear. (Lambs Theatre, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780.)

SPUNK—George C. Wolfe has adapted three short stories by Zora Neale Hurston, set in Harlem and the South, to make a gorgeous jazz-and-blues entertainment, giving them a powerful injection of his own mordant humor. Chic Street Man, singer and guitarist, wrote the dynamic score. With Ann Duquesnay (singer), and Victor Mack, Reggie Montgomery, Kevin Jackson, and Danitra Vance (actors). Mr. Wolfe directed. (5/7/90) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

TRU—Robert Morse gives a deeply thought-out, accomplished performance as Truman Capote—by turns funny, bitchy, ironic, and rueful—at the end of his life and his tether. The play was written and directed by Jay Presson Allen. (1/1/90) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

LONG RUNS

BLACK AND BLUE: An evening of classic blues and jazz, conceived, designed, and directed by Claudio Segovia and Héctor Orezzoli, who created "Tango Argentino" in a similarly commemorative but far less visually opulent style. Musicians of renown have been assembled, and while LaVern Baker, Linda Hopkins, and Carrie Smith sing, a troupe of hoofers young and old give the tap-dance subculture a workout. (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 246-0102.) ... **CATS**: Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to John Napier's sets and costumes. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200.) ...

THE FANTASTICKS: The longest-running long run recently celebrated its thirtieth birthday. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838.) ... **FORBIDDEN BROADWAY 1990**: A source of continual merriment, this revue is a cluster of parodies of shows along the Great White Way. Gerard Alessandrini conceived and directed it, and wrote the witty, barbed lyrics. (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.) ... **THE HEIDI CHRONICLES**: Wendy Wasserstein's play looks at first glance like standard baby-boom playwrighting fare, but some alchemical combination of graceful-mindedness and good writing enables her to capture, lampoon, and transcend her generation all at the same time. (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.) ...

JEROME ROBBINS' BROADWAY: A collection of high spots from "On the Town," "Billion Dollar Baby," "High Button Shoes," "The King and

I," "Peter Pan," "West Side Story," "Gypsy," "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum," and "Fiddler on the Roof," all of which were choreographed or directed, or both, by Jerome Robbins. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.) ... **LES MISÉRABLES**: The stars of this musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel are John Napier's settings and David Hersey's lighting. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200.) ... **NUNSENSE**: A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321.) ... **OTHER PEOPLE'S MONEY**: Jerry Sterner's comedy about a New York corporate raider's attempt to take over a decorous New England business maintains its suspense from beginning to end. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000.) ... **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA**: The much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets (by Maria Björnson), everything about the show is negligible. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

DANCE

WHEN Sandra Aberkalns watches the repertory of Paul Taylor as a member of the audience, everything interests her as part of a rich, ambiguous, ceaselessly shifting whole. When she sits next to Mr. Taylor day by day in the studio, however, her perspective narrows to two categories: those dances that are heaven to deal with, and those that are hell. Miss Aberkalns is a dance notator. Since 1987, she has worked exclusively for the Paul Taylor company, which has had a full-time Labanotator on its staff for the past fourteen years. As Miss Aberkalns told us recently, she is the only person on earth, apart from the choreographer himself, who has witnessed every single studio decision involved in the making—and remaking—of such works as "Speaking in Tongues," a dance that Mr. Taylor has continued to revise since its 1988 premiere. Another thing that sets Miss Aberkalns apart is that her ideas about the largest issues of notation differ from those of many of her colleagues. For her, *all* revisions made to a work while the choreographer is still the decision maker, including adjustments for subsequent casts, constitute the "text" of a dance, although at any given moment the most recent revisions have primacy. "As long as Paul is alive and he changes his works, mine are living scores," she told us recently. "Even when I can say I have finished notating a score, I always feel as if I know so much I haven't put in there."

Miss Aberkalns also spoke of how notation can tell future observers about today's performers. "If in fifty years people really want to know what the dancing of Cathy McCann or Kate Johnson *meant* to Paul, they won't find out the whole answer from video," she said. "But they can look at the notation of the parts he made for them, and see, analyzed exactly and in detail, what they were capable of when."

What does she find difficult to notate? we asked. "Movements of the hand and fingers," she said. "There are so many moving parts. Also, mood or attitude, like the sense of the nine-

teen-fifties that runs through 'Lost, Found, and Lost.' And lots of ad-lib or business with props, like the passages in 'Minikin Fair' when the false legs in red shoes stop becoming things you hold and start becoming actual third legs that take weight. And dances where there is no connection between the dancers' counts and the music, as in 'Counterswarm,' or where there is no musical notation, as in 'Speaking in Tongues,' or where the music itself is very complex, as in 'Sacre,' or where the thematic strains in the movement are not pronounced, as in 'The Sorcerer's Sofa.'" She paused a moment, and added, "The sections of dances that are difficult to notate are also the ones that are difficult for the dancers to learn or for new dancers to absorb. They usually don't depend on things you can talk about easily, and their movement is sometimes not even really set. Their performance often has to do with the feel of the group."

IN TOWN

AUSTRALIAN BALLET—A one-week engagement. July 23 at 7 and July 24-26 at 8: "Suite en Blanc" and "Giselle." ... ♪ July 27 at 8, July 28 at 2 and 8, and July 29 at 1:30: "Spartacus." (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000.)

GAIL CONRAD—Ms. Conrad's "Dance Motel" is a thirty-minute tease that manages to be a densely worked dance show anyway. Its three men and three women, remarkable performers all, wear bruise-me-choose-me black. The taped music boomerangs over thirty years of pop. It could be MTV-land, except you won't believe how much legwork Ms. Conrad has packed into two banquettes' worth of space: at one point all three guys are doing sissone splits. But the most startling thing is that, despite the close quarters and cues for drop-dead couple dancing, the sexes keep as separate from each other as if they were in adjoining gyms. (Birdland, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. 749-2228. July 26 and July 29 at 8.)

IORELLO FESTIVAL—Presenting two programs of works by Eleo Pomare, which will be performed by the Eleo Pomare Dance Company, the Alpha-Omega Dance Company, Robin Becker, and Maria Mitchell. July 27 at 8: "Hopper," "Nother Shade of Blue," "Folks-Say," "Homemade Ice Cream," "T.N.T.," and "Tabernacle." ... ♪ July 28 at 8: "Folks-Say," "Black Breeze," "Hex," "Homemade Ice Cream," "Narcissus Rising," and "Las Desenamoradas." (LaGuardia High School Concert Hall, 100 Amsterdam Ave., at 64th St. 877-3399.)

OUT OF TOWN

NEW YORK CITY BALLET—Final performances of the engagement. July 24 at 8:15: "Circus Polka," "Concerto Barocco," "Mozartiana," and "Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No. 2." ... ♪ July 25 at 8:15: "Prague Symphony," "Kammermusik No. 2," "Tarantella," and "Vienna Waltzes." ... ♪ July 26 at 2: "Circus Polka," "Concerto Barocco," "Fearful Symmetries," and "Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No. 2." ... ♪ July 26 at 8:15: "Prague Symphony," "Kammermusik No. 2," "Valse-Fantaisie," and "Vienna Waltzes." ... ♪ July 27 at 8:15: "Stravinsky Violin Concerto," "Ives, Songs," and "Prague Symphony." ... ♪ July 28 at 2: "Circus Polka," "Valse-Fantaisie," "Mozartiana," and "Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No. 2." ... ♪ July 28 at 8:15: "Stravinsky Violin Concerto," "Ives, Songs," and "Who Cares?" (Saratoga Performing Arts Center, Saratoga Springs. 1-518 587-3330.)

JACOB'S PILLOW DANCE FESTIVAL—Urban Bush Women, July 24-28. "Praise House," an evening-length work, will be presented. ... ♪ Ka Pa Hula Hawai'i Hula and Halau Hula O Hoakalei, July 24-28. ... ♪ Ballet Chicago, July 31-Aug. 4. Daniel Duell's company will perform "Apollo," "Allegro Brillante," "Three Chopin Preludes," "By Django," and "Les Fonds Sous-Marin." (Becket, Mass. For information about show times and tickets, call 1-413 243-0745.)

NIGHT LIFE

IN the fall of last year, we reported briefly on Wonderland and wrote it off as a disappointing, shabbily decorated blues bar that smelled like the site of a flood. Wonderland has undergone some changes since then. On a recent visit, in fact, we found on the same premises—at the corner of Second Avenue and 29th Street—a powder-blue, nicely appointed jazz club that bore no relation whatsoever to a disaster area. Wonderland's bookings, as well as its décor, have done a pleasant about-face in the last few months. The other night, we heard a glib, animated set by the singer Michele Hendricks. Like her father, Jon Hendricks is a fine scat singer, particularly in the area of impersonating instruments. She did such a wonderful approximation of a *thunk-thunking* standup bass during "Honeysuckle Rose," for example, that her bassist, Eric Lemon, looked about ready to head to the bar for a drink. Hendricks' set also included a breakneck version of "Green Dolphin Street"—she can tear through a lyric so fast that whether or not she's scattering is anybody's guess—and "Misty" (a song that the singer has just recorded and that, of course, includes the line "Would I wander through this wonderland alone?"). One of the evening's choicest entries was a tampered-with standard that told the story of a soldier who comes home after three years and finds his wife has had a baby, named Benny, of whom he is obviously not the father. Maybe you can see the punch line coming, but we couldn't: the soldier asks his wife where the baby came from, and his wife tells him, "Benny's from Heaven."

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

BALLROOM, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A sleek cabaret on the edge of Chelsea, near the flower and fur markets. **BETTY**, a three-woman singing group adept at keeping its audience off balance and a little unnerved, is here through July 28. Their show—equal parts performance art, cabaret, satirical funk, and standup comedy—moves at an amphetamine pace, and features a fun-house mix of surreal stories, ironic wordplay, and blue humor. Wednesday through Saturday at nine.

BIRDLAND, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—The jazz personnel turns over nearly every night at this airy, loftlike restaurant-bar, in the gray zone between Zabar's and Columbia. Some may cry gentrification at the sight of the pastel walls, the potted greenery, and the bar crowded with Frascati sippers, but the floor-to-ceiling windows make for some fine Broadway-viewing. The John Hart trio presides July 24-25, followed by the Bertha Hope foursome on July 26, Mark Morganeli's outfit on July 27-28, and Bopism on July 29. Music from nine Sundays through Thursdays and from nine-thirty Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A glitzy, color-coordinated jazz house, designed for maximum seating efficiency. The quartets of Courtney Pine and Christopher Hollyday trade sets July 24-29. The **MODERN JAZZ QUARTET**, a long-lived ensemble with a cool-as-all-getout sound and a repertoire of over four hundred tunes (many by pianist **JOHN LEWIS** or vibist **MILT JACKSON**), begins a run on July 31. Music from nine. Dining.

BOTTOM LINE, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—A big, pleasant room where they pack them in until someone says uncle. **BLUE NILE**, who'll be here July 23, is an enigmatic, slightly melancholy synth-pop trio from Scotland. The band's debut album, "A Walk Across Rooftops," got a remarkable critical reception, and it has taken them five years to release the equally strong follow-up, "Hats." The **FORESTER SISTERS** come in on July 25; singer-guitarist **JOHN HIATT**, who puts on wonderful shows and who makes the funniest faces either side of the Mississippi, will be here July 26-27 and 29-30. Hiatt's record "Slow Turning" has long been a favorite of ours. And while we might not take his latest effort, "Stolen Moments," to a desert island for thirty years, we'd certainly take it for a really long ride on the 1 train. For the last couple of years, Hiatt has trafficked primarily in gritty, confessional country rock, but "Stolen Moments" is a surprisingly loose, optimistic album, full of upbeat tempos and sing-along choruses. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Burgers, fries, and other things to make your heart beat faster.

BRADLEY'S, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A neighborhood bar where, if your neighbors cooperate, you can hear the beautiful, singular sound of musicians thinking. Pianist **JOANNE BRACKEEN** and bassist **CECIL MC BEE**—two regulars here, whom we've bobbed our head to on more than one occasion—will be in swing through July 28. A trio consisting of **GEOFF KEEZER**, **PETER WASHINGTON**, and **BEN RILEY** comes in on July 29. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

CARLYLE HOTEL, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—In Bemelmans' Bar, **FRANK OWENS**, whose musical tour of duty has included entertaining the troops at Mortimer's and serving as musical director for Johnny Mathis, Petula Clark, and others, can be found at the piano from nine-thirty Tuesdays through Saturdays.

CAT CLUB, 76 E. 13th St. (505-0090)—Every Sunday night, this club, usually dominated by heavy-metal acts, is ceded to a gang of Lindy Hop enthusiasts called the New York

Swing Dance Society. **VINCE GIORDANO & THE NIGHTHAWKS**, favorites on the swing circuit, do the honors on July 29. Music from eight to midnight.

CONDON'S, 117 E. 15th St. (254-0960)—In the shadow of the Zeckendorf Towers sits this low-ceilinged, stucco-walled grotto, whose intimate scale makes it a fine spot for jazz. **DAVID MURRAY**, a forceful, free-jazz-minded tenor saxophonist who, back in 1976, co-founded the World Saxophone Quartet, leads a quintet July 24-29. As of July 31, the club belongs to a quartet headed up by another Davis alumnus—the smooth, even-tempered saxophonist **LEE KONITZ**. Music after ten. Dining.

CONTINENTAL DIVIDE, 25 Third Ave., at St. Marks Pl. (529-6924)—Hipsters, posers, N.Y.U. students, the occasional skinhead—a typical East Village bar. The motif is prehistoric punk—there's a Stone Age mural, assorted toy dinosaurs and pterodactyls—and on peak nights there's a "take no prisoners" atmosphere. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at ten, Fridays at midnight, and Saturdays at eleven. Dining.

DAN LYNCH, 221 Second Ave., at 14th St. (677-0911)—Outside Dan Lynch, you'll come across a lot of suspicious characters who'll claim to know you; inside you'll find a pupil-dilating, brown-on-brown bar decorated with remnants of a birch tree. The place brightens up considerably at ten with a variety of live blues, including vamps of the "put on your red dress" variety.

DELTA 88, 332 Eighth Ave., at 26th St. (924-3499)—A pleasant hangout for white-collar trash, where you'll find cold Dixie beer, collard greens, and plenty of men who know how to wear a leather vest. As if that weren't enough, the bar-and-restaurant also features a corrugated-tin ceiling and a truckload of sort-of-Southern items: a photo booth, a giant Amoco sign, an Evel Knievel lunchbox. Most nights, the buffet turns into a bandstand at nine. Chicken-fried steak, deep-fried crawdads (a.k.a. Cajun popcorn), and other exotic Southern fare.

FAT TUESDAY'S, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—If submarines had jazz clubs, they might look like this basement haunt. Trombonist **AL GREY**, who spent a couple of decades in the Count Basie orchestra and who has long been known as a master of the rubber-plunger mute, leads a quintet here through July 29. Blues singer-pianist **MOSE ALLISON**, who, in the words of one writer, "brings you so far down it all looks like up," comes in on July 31. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL**, the Thomas Edison of reverb, leads a trio. Music from eight. Dining.

FORTUNE GARDEN PAVILION, 209 E. 49th St. (753-0101)—A jazz club disguised as a Chinese restaurant, the owners of which have, in a good-will gesture, eliminated its cover charge for the summer. July 24-29, pianist **DON FRIEDMAN** will be here with **LEW TABACKIN**, who plays clarinet, flute, and sax, and has for many years been the chief soloist for Toshiko Akiyoshi's big band. Music from eight Mondays through Saturdays, and from seven on Sundays.

INDIGO BLUES, 221 W. 46th St. (221-0033)—A modernist night spot in the basement of the Hotel Edison. There's a glass-brick reception area, an oval blond-wood bar, and other interior-design novelties. The lighting—blue neon, in laserlike strips and wide halos—works on the eyes like a long day in front of the PC. **RICHARD (GROOVE) HOLMES**, a hard-swinging organist, is on hand July 26-28. Mr. Holmes, who has recorded behind such heavies as Les McCann and Joe Pass, recently released a new record of his own, titled "Blues All Day Long." Music after nine.

JAN WALLMAN'S, 49 W. 44th St. (764-8930)—A cozy, Burgundy-red room for singers and their followers, cheek by jowl with the Iroquois Hotel. **AL CARMINE** will be here July 25-26; **KIM MAHANNY** and **BRIAN GARI** come in on July 27; and **ARTHUR SIEGEL** performs on July 30. Shows at nine and eleven. Dining. Closed Sundays.

KILIMANJARO, 531 W. 19th St. (627-2333)—The northern branch of the popular Washington, D.C., night spot. As the name suggests, African music is the sine qua non, be it live or d.j.-spun. Calypso, reggae, and world-beat formats also turn up. The reggae singer **EEK-A-MOUSE**, who is here on July 27, stands six feet six and has a theatrical flair: he's been known to come on stage dressed as an Arabian Nights character, a Musketeer, and Robin Hood. His singing style—he has a nasal, mannered voice and a talk/sing deliv-

OVERVIEW



Remember when Mom said, "Stop," and Dad said, "Too late," as the family car whizzed past yet another scenic overlook? Well, now if Dad is taking the F train from the Seventh Avenue station in Park Slope, Brooklyn, he has no excuse. Over the next year, riders here will be treated to "scenic overlooks" as interpreted by the artist Jane Greengold. Greengold has graced the station with three photomurals of Prospect Park sights: the ceiling of the tennis house; the Lafayette monument, at Ninth Street and Prospect Park West; and the meadow as seen from the park's pond. Funded by the Park Slope Civic Council and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's Arts for Transit program, the exhibition began in June and lasts for a year. The Seventh Avenue station, a particularly long underground area that runs from Seventh Avenue to Eighth Avenue, was chosen because of its vast hallways and its general dreariness. Greengold's work, based on her own experience with the vantage points common on many American highways, is a radical change from most subway art. The images poke fun at the sometimes arbitrary selection of traditional overlook sites, but they also provide a glimpse of the park's beauty. They make you want to pack a lunch, get the kids, and throw a ball around on the platform.

ery that comes from his days as a d.j.—is equally idiosyncratic. Shows begin at eleven-thirty.

KNITTING FACTORY, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—A second-floor music-and-performance space, where people come to ponder the meaning of harmonologies and the post-ness of postmodernism. The room is run by two amiable young guys from Wisconsin, whose views on such things as cover charges are enlightened. The **CUCUMBERS**, a likable Hoboken pop band whose popularity crested in the mid-eighties, perform on July 25, along with the Steve Weisberg Orchestra. Saxophonist **JOHN ZORN's** New Traditions in East Asian Bar Bands—a festival featuring various groups—will take place July 26-28. Music after nine.

LONE STAR ROADHOUSE, 240 W. 52nd St. (245-2950)—A cheery, climate-controlled restaurant and bar featuring a load of snazzy Gibson guitars, some Washington Square-style portraits of folks like Bo Diddley and Dr. John, and funky French fry-potato chip hybrids. **SCREAMIN' JAY HAWKINS**, the gruff-voiced shouter whose music made it a lot easier to sit through "Stranger Than Paradise," will prevail on July 28. Music after nine. Dining.

MAXWELL'S, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken. (1-201 798-4064)—A good sound system, cheap drinks, and a regular-guy atmosphere make this restaurant-bar, home of the Hoboken Sound and of the phrase "jangly guitars," a popular hangout for musicians and their followers. The **CHESTERFIELD KINGS**, a hell-raising sixties garage-rock outfit, comes in on July 27, as does Eddie Kirkland. **TINY LIGHTS** perform on July 28.

MICHAEL'S PUB, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—A mid-Manhattan pub for well-heeled gents and high-heeled ladies. **SID CAESAR** and **IMOGENE COCA** are here through July 28; **RUPERT HOLMES** begins a six-week stand on July 31. Dining. Closed Sundays.

RAINBOW & STARS, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—A moon-dust-in-your-hair cabaret where a club soda costs, well, a lot. There are plenty of niceties if you're so inclined: an ear-popping express elevator in which you can mingle with the famous; tables scattered with plastic diamonds and sapphires; and rest-room attendants who hover near the sink asking, "Is the water too warm?" Brooklyn-bred baritone **JULIUS LA ROSA**—whom Arthur Godfrey discovered in an officers' club in Pensacola—starts up on July 24, with a program of songs by Johnny Mercer, Sammy Cahn, Yip Harburg, and others. Shows from nine. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

SOUNDS OF BRAZIL, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—This former luncheonette has a tropical motif—straw huts, bamboo, a fake palm tree, a mosaic of gourds—and perhaps the city's most international booking policy: Brazil, Africa, and the Caribbean are just a few of the places explored. **BOBBY BYRD & THE JB ALL-STARS**, a.k.a. James Brown's Funky People, perform July 25-26. As Brown's backup band, the group laid down some of the funkier grooves known to man. Aside from Byrd, who wrote "Please, Please, Please," and co-wrote with Brown such hits as "Sex Machine" and "Soul Power," the All-Stars include tenor saxophonist Pee Wee Ellis, who was Brown's musical director in the sixties and seventies and who shares writing credits on "Cold Sweat," among others. Also: **MIKATA** on July 27, Johnny Ray on July 31, and 4 Brothers from Zimbabwe on Aug. 1. Music from nine Tuesdays through Thursdays, and from ten Fridays and Saturdays. Dining. Closed Sundays.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—An itinerary stop for the international jazz groupies who, on any given night, can be seen roaming the streets of the Village. Up front, there's a glass-enclosed sidewalk café; in back is a larger room, with

a pressed-tin ceiling, red brick, and more pinewood than a ski lodge. The sparkling bebop pianist **TOMMY FLANAGAN** leads a trio here Tuesdays through Sundays. The electrified big band of the late Gil Evans, now under the direction of his son, the trumpeter Miles Evans, is in action on Mondays. Tee-off time is ten. Dining.

WONDERLAND, 519 2nd Ave., at 29th St. (213-5098)—When you're hungry for the blues, or just plain hungry. The Les Duskin quartet is in action July 24-25; saxophonist **SONNY FORTUNE** and his group are on hand July 26-28; and Giacomo Gates claims July 31-Aug. 1. Shows Wednesdays and Thursdays at nine and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at nine, eleven, and one. Dining.

ZINNO, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A rarity among jazz clubs: somewhere you'd go to eat even if there were no music. The food is Italian, the atmosphere is pastels

and soft lights, and the musicians, who set up in a room between the bar and the dining room, are first-rate. Pianist **HILTON RUIZ**, who was a member of Rahsaan Roland Kirk's band in the seventies, leads a trio July 23-28; pianist **PETE MALINVERNI** and bassist **RAY DRUMMOND** begin work on July 30. Music from eight. Closed Sundays.

EDGE OF NIGHT LIFE

MADAME MELLEN in Pucci tights. Landlubber making bell-bottoms again. Karen Carpenter revivals. Peace-symbol earrings at Wetlands. Hot pants. (No matter what the kids who hang out at Patricia Field call them, eleven inches of denim with a zipper are not cutoffs). Still don't believe the early seventies are making a vengeful comeback? Then tell us the difference between house music and disco, or explain the euphoria at the Sound Factory last Tuesday night for a party/concert given by the New Music Seminar.

Nobody arrived until 1 A.M. (What happened to all those reformed record folk who told Rolling Stone interviewers about jogging at sunrise and their love affair with fibre?) The opening act played high-school-band homages to Steppenwolf in front of a Joshua Light Show redux, and while imaginary guitarists in the audience fretted away like Tom Cruise in "Risky Business" the stuff onstage was, in the words of the young man who had spread talc ("I got the powder," his girlfriend sang) across an area of the floor in a vain attempt to make the band more danceable, "major retro crash and burn."

But it didn't matter. It was just a temporary glitch in warp speed. All it took was the appearance of Deee-Lite, the group everyone was waiting for anyway, to thrust us back on track in reverse. The sight of Miss Lady Kier—in a headband, a Deborah Walley flip, metallic hot pants, vinyl peekaboo boots, and Mary-Quant-I-love-you makeup—spearheading Super D.J. Dmitry and Jungle D.J. Towa Towa on "Groove Is in the Heart," and anchoring a kick line with their

two zesty, zaftig go-go backups, recalled the world "Hullabaloo" and "Shindig" promised for our children: prime-time Love, Peace, and Soul, even if it was two o'clock in the morning. At the end of their set, Deee-Lite's tumultuous reception was generated not by stadium-size idolatry but by a disco's rocking energy. So when the trio-plus-two left the stage, few on the floor filed out. If the kids there had ever heard of Lerner and Loewe, they might have sung, "I could have danced all night." Instead, they just did it. Ah, to be able, at 4 A.M., to say, "Good Morning Starshine," once more, and mean it. Those were the days, my friend. Now these are them, too.

IN ANOTHER CATEGORY— PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

SERIOUS FUN!—Final performances—July 24: One-acts and antics, with Pat Oleszko, Leo Bassi, the Shrimps, and "Philip Glass Buys a Loaf of Bread," by David Ives. . . . July 25: Karen Finley in "We Keep Our Victims Ready." . . . July 26: Michael Moschen, a new-style juggler. . . . July 27-28: "Powaqqatsi," a film, shown to the accompaniment of the Philip Glass Ensemble. . . . July 31: Roc in Lichen, a dance duo from France. . . . Aug. 1-2: "Megadance," with Donald Byrd, Brenda Daniels, Margarita Guergue, John Kelly, Jim Self, and others. (Alice Tully Hall. 362-1911. Evenings at 8.)

ETHYL EICHELBERGER—Presenting his latest, "Das Vedanya, Mama." (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288. July 26-28 at 8.)

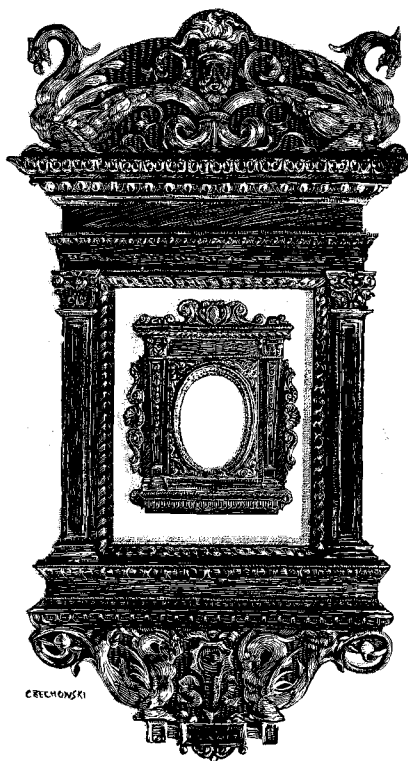
ART

ONE enters the Met's Lehman Wing, these days, through a wonderful exhibition of chess sets from the museum's collection. Don't just breeze by on your way to the Renaissance-frame show—the chess pieces and empty frames together create a remarkably poetic sequence of passageways. Many of the chess sets are terribly beautiful, but they also offer unexpected insight into a history of human rights. We are speaking here of the treatment of pawns. There are, for instance, two bracingly stylish sets, circa 1800, from Dieppe, whose pieces are the very essence of post-Revolutionary republican thinking—king, queen, bishop, and pawn alike are busts atop pedestals, and are of roughly equal size—while in an Austrian set from the early eighteenth century all pawns are cut off at the hip. The two queens in a Regency set—a Wedgwood charmer, based on earlier designs by John Flaxman—are a Lady Macbeth and the Tragic Muse as performed by Mrs. Siddons during the 1785 London theatre season, and the lowlies here are all handsome young actors striking abject Romantic poses. In an early-twentieth-century Nigerian set—the most frontal, upright, and direct of all—only the kings are clothed. A supremely elegant wood set, designed in 1924 by Man Ray, pulls rank by means of perfect geometry. But "Liberty Versus Slavery," an explicitly sculptural set designed by Alfred van Loen in 1963, is hardest on the competitive player. The pawns on one side shoulder boulders or clutch their heads despairingly, while on the other we find blithe youth in their position, and they are busy making music, not war.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—“Art of Central Africa” is a dense and compact show drawn from the nineteenth-century holdings of the Museum für Völkerkunde, in Berlin, and includes some of the finest works known from Angola, the People's Republic of Congo, and southern Zaire. The range is quite extraordinary, but the strongest works are the “power figures,” which were used for curing afflictions and for revenge. Each figure has an intense gaze, usually with its tongue sticking out of a rounded mouth, as if it were in some remote, drugged state. The most riveting figure is almost completely covered with fierce iron spikes, which were driven into it to unleash its powers. . . . ¶ “From Poussin to Matisse” includes some superb works among its fifty paintings, most notably Poussin's “Tancred and Erminia,” Watteau's “The Savoyard,” and Fragonard's “The Stolen Kiss.” Through July 29. . . . ¶ “Italian Renaissance Frames.” The concept of painting an illusionary scene on a two-dimensional surface has always been dependent on the frame to establish the painting's world. This exhibition, which brings the frames themselves to life, demonstrates why at one time wood carving was considered a higher art than painting. Most of the frames are empty, and after a while the eye becomes so finely tuned to this delicate, often elaborate art that the occasional El Greco within may appear out of place. Through Sept. 2. . . . ¶ In a concurrent show, fifty-five American frames from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are on view. Through Sept. 2. . . . ¶ A well-selected display of ninety-four Chinese ceramics spanning twenty-two centuries. There are some beautiful pieces from the Tang dynasty, including a massive horse and an elongated equestrienne, and even the simpler Cizhou ware and a Northern Sung bowl are exquisite. Through Aug. 26. . . . ¶ “Chess and Art,” a show of eighty complete and partial sets made of stone, wood, porcelain, and other materials, from the sixth century to the twentieth. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W. 53rd St.—Lorna Simpson's recent success—a much touted solo show at the Josh Baer gallery, inclusion in the Aperto section of this year's Venice Biennale, and now a small “projects” exhibition here—is a healthy sign. It indicates the art world's openness, amid its own insulated racism, to a black woman artist. Her phototext pieces use the clean, crisp, quietly authoritative form of white-male conceptual art to question issues of race, gender, and identity in general. The work is intelligent and thoughtful, but none too original: it's of the sort that can be seen in profusion in any American art center today. With luck, her success will not discourage the evolution of her œuvre and will encourage the mainstream to look in deeper ethnic waters next time. Through Aug. 26. . . . ¶ “Matisse in Morocco.” The belief is becoming more widespread that Matisse's greatness has been eclipsed by Picasso's because so many of the Frenchman's best works have been hidden away in Soviet museums. The case is persuasively argued by this glorious display of paintings—close to half of them from the Pushkin and the Hermitage—and drawings that Matisse made during two trips to Morocco in 1912 and 1913. The so-called Moroccan Triptych is as sumptuous as painting gets, and all of the works are so rich that it's fortunate the show is lean and concise. Through Sept. 4. . . . ¶ A retrospective featuring fifty-nine paintings by Francis Bacon. Through Aug. 28. . . . ¶ Twenty new black-and-white etchings by James Turrell. Starts July 26. . . . ¶ “Artist's Choice”: Paintings, sculptures, collages, and photographs selected by Ellsworth Kelly. Included are works by Picabia, Brancusi, Malevich, and Mondrian. Through Sept. 4. . . . ¶ “Architectural Drawings of the Russian Avant-Garde.” Through Sept. 4. . . . **NOTE:** The museum's sculpture garden, at 14 W. 54th St., is open, free, on Fridays and Saturdays from 6 to 10, with musicians from the Juilliard School performing at 7:30. (The museum is open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)



CERCHONSKI

“Italian Renaissance Frames” at the Met

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—The museum is closed for renovation until autumn, 1991.

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—Ten graphite drawings from 1965 by Ed Ruscha. They are related to his photography book from that year, “Some Los Angeles Apartments.” Starts July 27. . . . ¶ If an artist's value were measured by his influence, Hans Hofmann (1880-1966) would certainly be among the most important of this century: he trained more American young hopefuls than anyone else. But one need only look at MOMA's current “Matisse in Morocco” show to realize that Hofmann was a fine but ultimately minor artist. He certainly knew how to paint, and there are many charmers in this meticulously arranged retrospective, along with a few great paintings—“Memoria in Aeternum” and “Song of the Nightingale” float to the top. But there's also a lot of well-balanced glop. Hofmann represents the beginning of the end for abstract painting, offering vision without ever being a visionary. In the long run he may be best remembered not as the mentor of Burgoyne Diller, Louise Nevelson, Alfred Jensen, and Helen Frankenthaler but as the dean of abstract painting, a teacher who transformed scores of unfocused artists into competent ones by training them to make “good” compositions that “worked.” Through Sept. 16. . . . ¶ “Maurice Prendergast (1858-1924).” A retrospective of more than a hundred paintings by this popular artist and co-organizer of the legendary Armory Show demonstrates his ability to capture some very pretty moments of leisure with decorative mosaics of dabbed paint, but it also shows how he was trivialized by his own redundancy and

overdependence upon tame Americana. Through Sept. 2. (Open Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

BROOKLYN MUSEUM, Eastern Parkway—A compare-and-contrast exercise is offered in a show of thirty-three watercolors by Winslow Homer (1836-1910) and John Singer Sargent (1856-1925). Through Sept. 3. . . . ¶ “The Intimate Interiors of Edouard Vuillard” includes more than a hundred paintings and works on paper, all completed between 1890 and 1900. Through July 30. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, Central Park W. at 79th St.—Shortly after King Leopold II of Belgium was forced to end his rampage through the inappropriately named Congo Free State—today's Zaire—this museum mounted an expedition through that vast area that employed thirty-eight thousand porters and lasted from 1909 to 1915. The travellers brought back fifty-four tons of collectibles, most notably the rare animals that continue to grace the dioramas in the Akeley Hall of African Mammals. This show is primarily made up of objects relating to the expedition and accumulated from the Mangbetu people of what is now northeastern Zaire: musical instruments with highly inventive figurative carvings; photographs of people with outrageous hats and hairdos; books such as “The Curse of Central Africa,” of 1903, by Captain Guy Burrows; sculptures with Brancusiesque faces that should inspire further rethinking of the history of abstraction; and numerous pieces that display colonial references, including gourds carved with images of armed soldiers. (Open Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5:45; Wednesdays, 10 to 9; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5.)

FRICK COLLECTION, 1 E. 70th St.—A selection of nearly a hundred and fifty Chinese porcelain winepots, jars, dishes, and vases made between 1620 and 1683 is on view. Through Aug. 19. (Open daily, except Mondays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

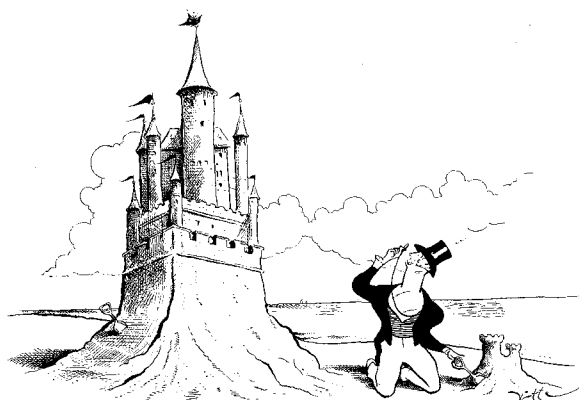
GROUVER CLUB, 47 E. 60th St.—Eighty-two examples of incunabula—books printed before 1501, no more than fifty years after the invention of printing—from the Bibliotheca Philosophica Hermetica, in Amsterdam. Through Aug. 24. (Open Mondays through Fridays, 10 to 5.)

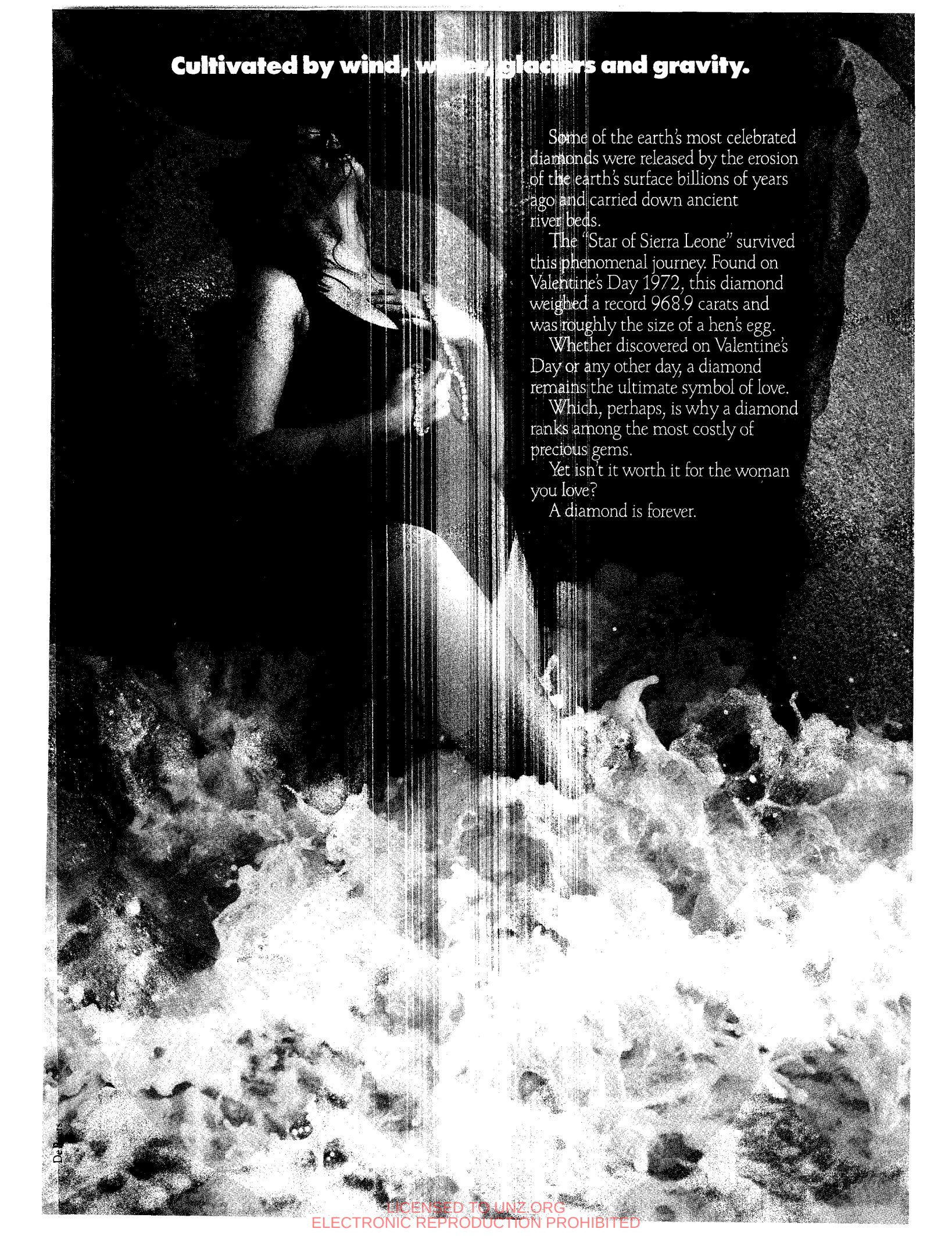
JEWISH MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—Two displays of photographic works by the artists Wijnanda Deroot and Hélène Hourmat. Through Aug. 2. (Open Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, noon to 5; Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

MORGAN LIBRARY, 29 E. 36th St.—From an exquisite portrait of a woman by Petrus Christus to a delicate watercolor of the Château Noir by Paul Cézanne, this superb exhibition of five centuries of master drawings from the Museum Boymans-van Beuningen (in Rotterdam) is a joy. There is a toe-curling drawing of feet by Dürer, a spellbinding allegory called “Temperance” by Bruegel, a mystifying and exceedingly rare Giorgione, and fine examples by Aldorfer, Grünewald, Rembrandt, Annibale Carracci, Pisanello, and Goya. There are Watteaus that could make you weep, as well as fine works by Ingres, Daumier, and Manet. Through Aug. 5. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK, Fifth Ave. at 104th St.—The Gibson Girl did everything: she boated, she bicycled, she played tennis, she drove, she partied, and she married. Of course, all of these pursuits demanded different costumes, and Charles Dana Gibson's turn-of-the-century drawings created the kind of versatile mystique that would make Calvin Klein fall off his horse. The Gibson Girl's heyday, from 1895 to 1905, is celebrated in this show of thirteen full costumes, along with drawings, photographs, and memorabilia. (Open daily, except Mondays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—An exhibit devoted to Portugal's pioneering maritime exploration, notably of Brazil, and its impact on European culture. Maps, treaties, and navigational instruments from the mid-fifteenth century to the late six-





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—Automobile Magazine



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—Automobile Magazine

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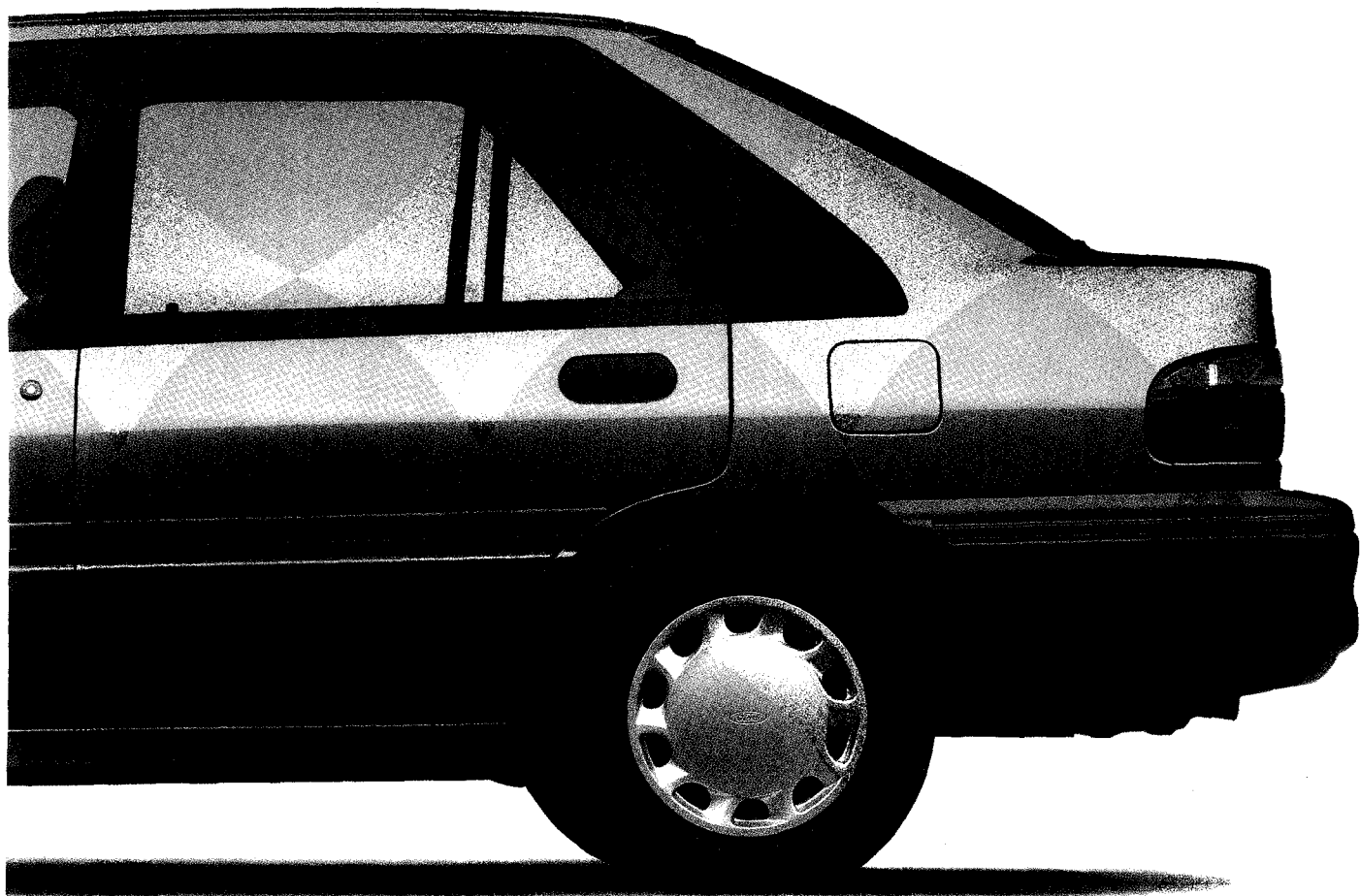
transmission (noted for its smoothness), and its new, optional electronically-controlled four-speed automatic transmission that delivers smooth, steady performance. Smooth and steady also perfectly describe Escort's ride, provided by its new independent suspension system.

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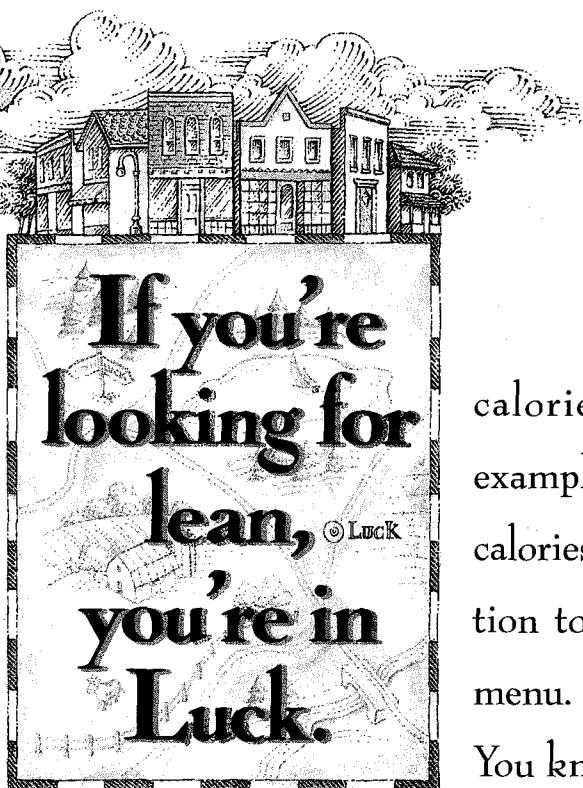
The New Escort

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I'd like to tell you a juicy story. A story everyone in Luck, Wisconsin knows. It's about herb marinated beef steak. It's about braised steak provençal and broiled steaks with company potatoes. But most of all, it's about good fortune. Because many cuts of beef are surprisingly low in calories. Lower than most people think. A lean, trimmed three-ounce serving averages less than 200



calories. Round tip, for example, hardly tops 149 calories. That's an inspiration to anyone holding a menu. Or following a diet. You know, according to legend, the town of Luck was named by Dan Smith, an early logger. Having faced much adversity in life, he solved the problem by always being "in Luck." Today, our luck is still pretty good —delicious, in fact. Where would we be without beef? Out of luck, I'd say. See you in the next town. 



ROUND TIP 149 calories
5.0 gms total fat* (1.8 gms sat. fat)

TOP ROUND 169 calories
4.3 gms total fat* (1.5 gms sat. fat)

TOP LOIN 168 calories
7.1 gms total fat* (2.7 gms sat. fat)

EYE OF ROUND 141 calories
4.0 gms total fat* (1.5 gms sat. fat)

TENDERLOIN 175 calories
8.1 gms total fat* (3.0 gms sat. fat)

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5.8 gms total fat* (2.3 gms sat. fat)

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Real food for real people.

*Source: USDA Handbook 8-13 1990 Rev. Figures are for a 3 oz. cooked serving. Beef trimmed before cooking. 4 oz. uncooked yield 3 oz. cooked. For a beef recipe booklet, write the B.I.C., Dept. T, 444 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60611. Please enclose 50¢. ©1990 Beef Industry Council and Beef Board

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

teenth are on display, along with manuscripts, letters, and paintings. Through Sept. 1. (Gottesman Exhibition Hall. Open daily, except Sundays, 10 to 6.)

ISAMU NOGUCHI GARDEN MUSEUM, 32-37 Vernon Blvd., at 33rd Road, Long Island City—Noguchi (1904-88), one of the twentieth century's singular talents, designed this oasis for more than two hundred and fifty of his sculptures. It contains a wide range of his work—from the early surrealist biomorphic sculptures to several types of stone carvings—and documentation of his prodigious public art. The centerpiece of the museum is a peaceful, ivy-walled garden dotted with the artist's works. (Open Wednesdays and Saturdays, 11 to 6.)

QUEENS MUSEUM, Flushing Meadow Park—"The Expressionist Surface." It is doubtful that this show of contemporary art in plaster will result in increased sales of the material. But no matter how silly the exhibition is, it is probably worth a visit, if only to see several superb early George Segal sculptures, from 1958, a clear reminder of his roots in Abstract Expressionism. There are also a few works from the late fifties and early sixties by the Bay Area sculptor Manuel Neri, a fine, underrated artist whose best side is perhaps not so visible here. But most of the work by the fourteen other artists is clearly in the shadow of Segal, lacking the poignant restraint and poetic dignity of the master himself. Their pieces are little more than cheap expressions of creepy emotional realism—the sculptural equivalent of the most obvious sort of expressionistic painting. Through Aug. 26. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, noon to 5:30.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Mondays through Fridays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

GROUP SHOW—In keeping with the Gagosian gallery's ongoing and often successful campaign to resemble a wing at the Modern, it is now home to a rotating group of textbook classics by Rothko, Newman, de Kooning, Gorky, Franz Klein, Warhol, Rauschenberg, and Lichtenstein. The gallery looks impressive, but with no stylistic surprises to set off this drumroll it seems cold and even staid. Through Aug. 31. (980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.)

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

"SOME SEVENTIES WORKS"—This interesting variation on the summer gallery group show includes some superb art works. Chief among them is a grand, multipanel painting by Joan Mitchell, who manages to bring muscle to the color pink; an incisive, resonant Pat Steir that is filled with orchids, "X's," and marginal notations and that deals with issues of representation, negation, and conceptual art; a black-and-white Al Held, heavy with countless layers of paint, that is simple yet elusive; and a Milton Resnick that exhibits, quite simply, fine painting. Even the show's minor works are fascinating: an early Robert Mapplethorpe self-portrait has a quietly passionate vulnerability, and an Andy Warhol "Still Life" drawing from the hammer-and-sickle series displays intelligence and complexity. Through July 31. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

"THE URBAN LANDSCAPE"—A show of works tracing city and industrial development in the twentieth century. Most of the contemporary paintings and photographs are quite dull, but there are a few fine Aldo Rossi ink washes from the seventies, as well as cityscape drawings from the teens by Mario Sironi and heroic, futuristic etchings of factories by Guido Balsamo Stella from 1912. Through Aug. 3. (Daverio, 41 E. 57th St.)

GROUP SHOW—Curated by Burnett Miller, a well-known Los Angeles art dealer, this cool and coherent show documents a resurgence of minimalism, but in a new, more sensuous, mannered mood. Established artists include Ulrich Ruckriem and Wolfgang Laib, but the news has to do with promising younger artists, such as the California-based Sarah Seager—whose influences seem to include Dan Flavin and Robert Ryman—and the Romanian-born Serge Spitzer, now based in Berlin and New York, whose milled-aluminum wall

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Ellsworth Kelly: "Artist's Choice" show at MOMA, and new work at 65 Thompson

reliefs with rubber matting suggest that Ryman was an inspiration here, too. Through July 27. (Galerie Lelong, 20 W. 57th St.)

GALLERIES—SoHo

DAVID HOCKNEY—A fascinating selection of drawings from the early sixties executed in a raw, scratchy style, done before the artist's line became too fluid and easy. They reveal a sense of struggle and torment, and perhaps a hint of Bacon and Dubuffet. Through July 27. (Kasmin, 580 Broadway.)

TEDDY SCHAPIRO / CHRIS WILDER—Ordinary-seeming people are combined in peculiar ways bordering on the surreal in these curious paintings. Executed in a dry, regionalist style with backgrounds the colors of Necco Wafers, the works have the subtly perverse space seen in early David Salles. / An amusing and somewhat farfetched mixed-media installation about U.F.O.s, originality, and truth. The piece utilizes several appropriated texts—including one about an unrealized art work by the California perceptualist Michael Asher—a mirror, screen prints, paintings on the kind of iridescent fabric favored by drag queens, and a pink Ping-Pong ball. Through July 27. (Petersburg, 130 Prince St.)

ALAN SONFIST—Of all the artists working with dirt, from the earth artists onward, Sonfist has perhaps been the most elusive. To judge by the current exhibition, which includes work from the past twenty-five years, this is more a function of exposure than of the art itself. There are delicate, elfin sculptures, described as "Bronze Castings of Potentially Endangered Trees," contemplative mud paintings of California and New York City, and a process-oriented sculpture consisting of huge dirt-covered plaster forms strewn across the floor. An upright plastic box filled with crystals, which have been in a constant state of transformation since the piece was made, in 1966, could provide an excellent history lesson to some of the young science-fair sculptors. Sonfist's most significant work is his public art, represented here by photo-documents of such projects as "Time Landscape," a precolonial forest the artist planted in 1965 at the northeast corner of Houston and LaGuardia, which remains one of New York's most resilient public art works. Through July 27. (Protetch, 560 Broadway.)

CHRISTOPHER WOOL—Large paintings on paper, of either a Penckian phoenix or what might be described as a black putto done in the racist style of thirties Hollywood movies. The

two images are arranged in various combinations—singly, in pairs, as friezes. The paintings are smart-ass, cynical works about the state of originality and the role of the artist in today's art world, but they are also surprisingly penetrating and pack a hard punch. Through Sept. 12. (Luhning Augustine, 130 Prince St.)

"STENDHAL SYNDROME: THE CURE"—The people at the Rosen gallery have taken an irreverent article on the "Stendhal Syndrome"—an affliction first diagnosed, appropriately, in Florence, in which the art-saturated tourist becomes euphoric, hysterical, or depressed because of too strong a communion with art—and used it as the inspiration for mounting a good old-fashioned, messy group show. Artists were offered a first-aid kit and asked to come up with a cure for those who have overdosed on beauty. Many participants, naturally, chose a somewhat homeopathic prescription (akin to torture) of an equally intense overdose of daily life: Richard Tuttle filled his kit with a Walkman and a continuous tape of music from television commercials; Mary Weatherford's proposed cure consists of the incessant playing of the disco song "Love Hangover"; and Meg Webster came up with the simplest form of self-psychotherapy—a mirror. Liz Lerner has displayed her kit empty; Haim Steinbach stacked a trio as if they were abstract inventory; Christian Marclay exploded his kit; and Ashley Bickerton used his to pack medicines for a trip to the wilds of Southeast Asia. The most poignant piece, however, is by Felix González-Torres, who put in his kit a reproduction of a Goya painting of a dandyish doll (in color) and a snapshot of white supremacists (in black-and-white). These two images, inhabiting the same tight space, contrast love and hate, freedom and oppression, art and life. Through Aug. 3. (130 Prince St.)

"THE THING ITSELF"—This exhibition of "art in which the integrity of found objects remains intact during both the making and the viewing of the work" has a nice rhythm to it. Among the more compelling inclusions are a Mike Kelley stuffed-animal sculpture titled "Double Flaccid Cat" and a Ken Lum piece with two ordinary love seats stacked and facing a corner. The most intriguing work is a Robert Gober from the late seventies, in which a model of a Greek Revival mansion is cut in half and slammed against the wall, each half in a separate room. Adrian Piper's soul-catching work, begun in 1985, consists of an autobiographical text and jars filled with the artist's hair, nail clippings, and skin shavings, to be added to until her death. Through Aug. 10. (Feature, 484 Broome St. Closed Mondays; open Saturdays.)

"THE BOOK AS ART / THE BOOK IN ART"—From the Dadaists to contemporary artists as diverse as Ed Ruscha, Sol LeWitt, and Jenny Holzer, books have provided one of the richest formats for artistic exploration. Although recent attacks on freedom of expression have brought a new relevance to the written word, this exhibition favors artists who use books as objects, as forms, with a decidedly anti-reading emphasis. There are delicate porcelain pieces that look like burnt or worm-eaten books, for example, and German phone books that have been torn and arranged in circular patterns. Works by a few "names," like Rauschenberg and Samaras, are thrown in for legitimacy. Through July 31. (Fendrick, 568 Broadway, entrance on Prince St.)

GROUP SHOWS—At A/D, 560 Broadway: "The Garden" is a long-term, evolving, and very pleasant exhibition of decorative and functional outdoor and household objects designed by artists. David Deutsch, for instance, has made a funny and good-looking upright writing desk from the sort of aluminum tubing and vinyl webbing we associate with lawn chairs; April Gornik is represented by a painted prototype for a whimsical and traditional iron gate with animal figures; Andrew Lord shows a group of evocative standing lamps with bronze bases and papier-mâché shades that suggest the melting forms of Art Nouveau and baroque "grotto" styles; McDermott & McGough have produced an edition of sundials. Through July 31. **BURGIN**, 130 Prince St.: The work of the three artists in this exhibition is tied together dubiously by a recurring motif of scratchy, nervous swirls, but the result is a handsome, form-co-

ART—Cont'd

ordinated installation. A series of quite beautiful recent drawings by John Cage displays a faint, balletic scratchiness; Richard Tuttle's constructions of cut-and-curved paper, with their loose strands of glue as delicate as silk thread, are rickety but soothing. There is also a large standing sculpture by Alan Saret made of bent chain-link fencing. Through July 31. (Closed Mondays.) . . . **CERVERA**, 470 Broome St.: Titled "The Painter and His Occasion," this straightforward if slightly spacey show, assembled by guest curator Alan Jones, is of works by eleven artists who together make a pretty strong case for the vitality of abstract painting in its more personal, poetic, lyrical, gestural, and illusionistic forms. Lydia Dona, Dennis Ashbaugh, and Taro Suzuki weigh in with the most ambitious, least eccentric works. But "Charlie's Vineyard," a modest and almost impressionistic painting by Charles Di Julio, takes the prize for charm, and Richard Hennessy's "Almost There" is the most ebullient and virtuosic. Through July 27. . . . **GLADSTONE**, 99 Greene St.: A cool and moody summer exhibition, including a Robert Gober "sink," here looking very Standard indeed; a big airy stretch of graphic wall scripture, "As If It Had Not," by the cryptically wise Lawrence Weiner; and a group of large, velvety photographs, melancholic and terribly beautiful, by Craigie Horsfield, a public-school Englishman looking downward, leftward, and eastward. Horsfield's pictures have something in common with the films of Alain Tanner—an erotics, perhaps, and a feeling of sensuous alienation. Through July 27. . . . **KOURY WINGATE**, 578 Broadway: Everything in this show is geometric, but each work has a somewhat kinky edge that puts a spin on the abstraction. This quality is most evident in Georg Herold's four massive wood beams on canvas, which is hilarious, although it's hard to say why; and in Stephen Laub's two wall-mounted aluminum-leafed cones, one with a tiny window that reveals, in peep-show fashion, a picture of a cratered field in Vietnam. Franz West's welded-metal chaise is more comfortable than it looks; and General Idea's text piece, with a photo showing a rectangular Hitler mustache of milk on a blond boy's lip, has the dual implications of nourishment and evil and is a veritable Freudian minefield. Through July 27. . . . **303 GALLERY**, 89 Greene St.: An intriguing, if not entirely enjoyable, show of glib work born of unvented frustration. Sue Williams' captioned cartoon paintings of abrasive male sexism and Gavin Brown's graphic word works are all about sex—sex stripped of sexuality, that is: they are far from erotic or even titillating. Karen Kilimnik's anarchic installation, with baby toys, packaged desserts, and articles about lost dogs and "The Avengers" strewn across the floor, is somewhat related in tone, and seems to be about middle-American overload. Her drawings, which seem like crudely written twists on childhood "Dick and Jane" stories—"Jane is dragged away from the beach by white slavers," for example, or "Jane falls down on the street, a Jaguar hits her"—are the most resonant works on display, perhaps because of their understatedness. Through July 31.

SHORT LIST—**AIDAN AND MITTA**, Cadot, 470 Broome St. (through Aug. 3); **ELLSWORTH KELLY**, 65 Thompson Street Gallery (closed Mondays, through July 31).

OTHER GALLERIES

"**THE ANCHORAGE**"—The artists exhibiting this summer in New York's most dramatic space for contemporary art, the vaulted brick anchorage beneath the Brooklyn Bridge, take very seriously the various indications that our golden society is falling apart. As usual, the quality is uneven, and some things look much better than they actually are. There is an overabundance of sound installations with echoing voices and low-level, mood-evoking blue lights (one includes the spoken text "We are the names of time. To talk is human"). But there are also some very affecting works. Jim Goldberg has constructed a full-size house of the picket-fence variety; on its exterior he has projected slides of homeless youths and their drawings, which describe in documentary detail the squalor, danger, and isolation in which they live. Nancy Rubins has erected a personal public monument, a memorial to a collaborator who died recently of AIDS. It is a massive piece that includes a

huge, dead oak tree and is composed of sixty thousand pounds of rubble from a sculpture they constructed together, most of it contained now in sealed metal cases. In a simple, stark sound work, Jerri Allyn makes such commonsense statements as "Jasper Johns sells in the millions, paintings with defaced flag use" and "Wouldn't you love to hear Rohrabacher tell us why Courbet's rollicking, and decidedly lesbian-looking women, are glorious?" and repeatedly wonders what it would take to "get the sixty per cent we rarely hear from to write to their Senate and their Congress" in support of freedom of speech and the N.E.A. Through Oct. 7. (Cadman Plaza West at Front St., Brooklyn. Thursdays through Sundays, noon to 6.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

"**NELLIE**. Does papa raise any potatoes like these, that only take twelve for a load?" is the deadpan question written by one Grandma Tuell on the back of one of the hundreds of humorous postcards reproduced in "Larger Than Life," a new book, published by Abbeville Press. On the front of Grandma Tuell's card is a picture of a miniature wagon full of twelve potatoes, each of them giant in relation to the vehicle. The book, written by Cynthia Elyce Rubin and Morgan Williams, is a charming look at photography as a folk art and as a form of all-American funnies. It consists of reproductions of postcards made between 1905 and 1915, most of them hyperbolic jokes having to do with enormous fruits, vegetables, or fish—turns on "the American tall tale," as the subtitle puts it. Although the writing is lumpish, it is informative about this idiosyncratic turn-of-the-century postcard fad, and the social and economic context in which it flourished. But the real appeal of the publication is that it has so many examples of these ingenious cards. Our favorite is of a small boy riding what at first looks like a chicken-and-buggy. On second glance the buggy proves to be a camera. The creator of this image was clearly a card.

HELEN CHADWICK—An installation made up of photographic objects and large Polaroids—most of them of raw meat products arranged on backgrounds of various fabrics. The pictures were produced over a period of two days, at the Victoria and Albert Museum, in London, with museum visitors watching. There are some additional touches, such as rococo mirrors, rococo candlesticks, and jars of pimientos, that make the gallery feel like a home environment. Through Aug. 11. (Burden, 20 E. 23rd St. Opens at noon Tuesdays through Saturdays.)

FELIX TEYNARD (1817-92)—The Met has mounted a passionate show of thirty-five primarily architectural views of Egypt taken from 1851 to 1852 by this French civil engineer. At the time, each photograph was still an almost miraculous event, and in these pictures you can feel how everything counted, how nothing about the process was taken for granted. The salted paper Teynard used has a marvellous delicacy compared with today's slicker, thicker papers, and it contributes to the over-all sense of awe and achievement. Another unique feature of this show is the inclusion of Teynard's photo of the Temple of Dendur—the very same monument that is now on view in the Museum's Sackler wing. Through Sept. 9. (Metropolitan Museum.)

SHORT LIST—**MARILYN BRIDGES**, International Center of Photography Midtown, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St. (open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 8, through Sept. 2); **JOHN MAGGIOTTO**, Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St. (closed Mondays, through July 27); **LINNAEUS TRIPE** and **SUZANNE OPTON**, Lowinsky, 584 Broadway (closed Mondays, open Saturdays, through Aug. 18).



Matt Haimovitz at Mostly Mozart

MUSIC

IGNAZ MOSCHELES, a Prague-born pianist and composer who lived from 1794 to 1870 (mostly in Vienna, London, and Leipzig), is one of the most likable figures in the history of music. Everyone who reads widely in nineteenth-century concert life seems to nourish a special affection for him, and so do we—even though, when one gets right down to it, the bulk of his output consists of fairly trivial potpourris, pianoforte reminiscences of this or that opera, variations on national airs, and so on. He also composed essays in the more serious forms, and if those that we have heard are marked more by devotion, thoughtfulness, proportion, and elegance than by any great passion or genius, we fondly associate the musical traits with the virtues of the man, and listen happily.

There is almost certainly a correspondence. One might call Moscheles' music "modest," not to patronize or to condescend but to associate it with a mind and talent well developed and secure, yet not so obsessed with itself as to be closed to others' thoughts. Moscheles had a fine classical training as a boy, fell under the spell of the new firebrand Beethoven, and went to Vienna both to make his way in the world and to meet the composer. The newcomer quickly became a very fashionable virtuoso, but he was devoted enough to Beethoven to undertake the chore of making a piano score of "Fidelio," and to succeed (where Hummel stumbled) in doing this to Beethoven's specifications, without imposing too much of his own pianistic style. Later, he taught young Mendelssohn for a while, and this was the beginning of a lifelong friendship. Still later (and this is one of the main reasons we like him), he maintained a "classical," conservative stance without raining cheap invective on radicals like Chopin, Liszt, and Wagner, and indeed managed to remain open to and curious about their innovations. And he did all sorts of other fascinating things. Who would expect,

in the middle of the nineteenth century, to find a celebrated virtuoso playing Handel, Bach, and Scarlatti on a *harpsichord*? (Yes, an original instrument!)

All this comes up because a serious work by Moscheles that we have not heard, a Concertante for Flute and Oboe with orchestra, will be performed at the Washington Square Music Festival (with Julius Baker and Henry Schuman, conducted by Arturo Delmonico) on July 24 at 8 P.M.

IN TOWN

MOSTLY MOZART FESTIVAL—July 23: The Emerson String Quartet is joined by Carol Wincenc, flute, and Misha Dichter, piano, in a concert of Mozart, Schumann, and Dvořák. . . . July 24-25: Mozart's Piano Concerto in E-Flat, K. 482 (with Barry Douglas), his Clarinet Concerto (with Richard Stoltzman), and works of Haydn and Rossini, with Mark Elder leading the festival orchestra. . . . July 26: The Tokyo String Quartet plays Mozart's "Dissonance" Quartet, and is joined by pianist Emanuel Ax for Schumann's Piano Quintet and by the Alexander String Quartet for Mendelssohn's Octet. . . . July 27-28: Dutch conductor Hans Vonk leads the festival orchestra in works by Mozart, and is joined by Matt Haimovitz for Haydn's C-Major Cello Concerto, and by Misha Dichter for Beethoven's First Piano Concerto. At nineteen years of age, Mr. Haimovitz balances a taxing schedule of performance (two European tours this year, so far) and recording (exclusively with DG, since 1987) with less rarefied pursuits (he's a Princeton sophomore). . . . July 30: The Classical Band, with conductor Trevor Pinnock and natural-horn soloist Lowell Greer, in early-instrument interpretations of Mozart and Schubert. . . . July 31-Aug. 1: The festival orchestra, conducted by Gerard Schwarz, plays Mozart and Schubert symphonies, as well as Mozart works for violin and orchestra, featuring Itzhak Perlman. (Avery Fisher Hall. 874-2424. Evenings at 8.)

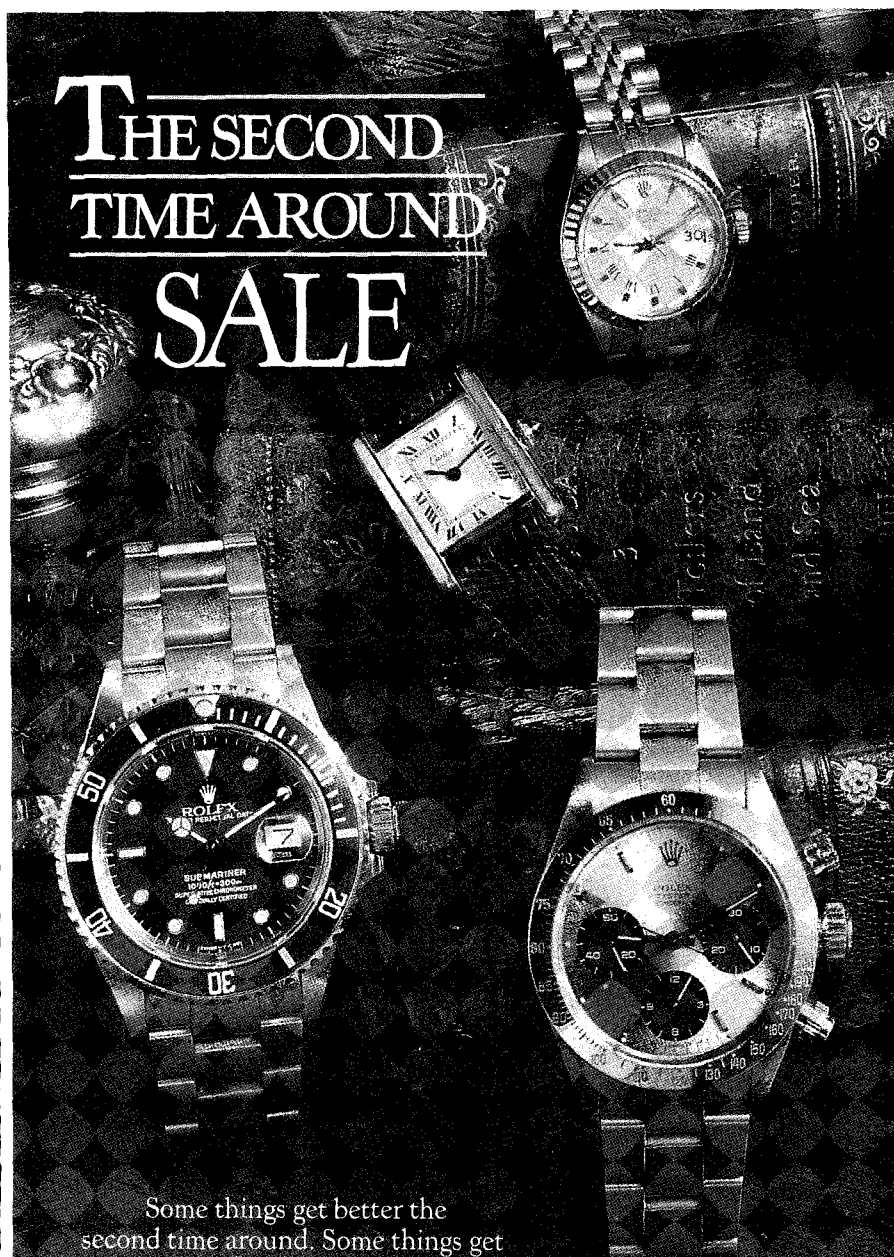
BARGEMUSIC—Pianist Joseph Villa plays music by Schubert arranged by Liszt, and—with violinist Christiaan Bor—sonatas by Brahms and Franck. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061. July 26-27 at 7:30 and July 29 at 4.)

"AMERLANO"—Handel's five-and-a-half-hour opera, which had a successful premiere in 1724, is performed by the Measured Breaths Theatre Company in an English translation, serialized, with one act presented over each of three consecutive weekends. Director Robert Press recently said that he finds each act "a show in itself," and that he seeks "to move completely out of the bel-canto setting, to one where drama is just as important as music and where the audience can interact with the onstage performers." Patricia Fortner conducts a ten-instrument ensemble in a rescoring aimed at producing a more twentieth-century sound. (Cooper Square Theatre, 50 E. 7th St. 228-0811. Act I: July 26-29 at 8.)

SHOSTAKOVICH STRING QUARTET—Having performed in thirty countries on four continents, and built up a discography of nearly thirty recordings, the Moscow-based quartet makes its New York debut as part of its first American tour. The ensemble, founded in 1967, has programmed quartets by Tchaikovsky, Shostakovich, and the late violinist Alexander Balashov, a founding member of the group. (Winter Garden, World Financial Center. July 29 at 3. No tickets necessary.)

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC—In its annual series of free outdoor concerts, Yoel Levi conducting Mendelssohn and Berlioz (followed by fireworks). **CENTRAL PARK'S GREAT LAWN**: July 30. . . . **VAN CORTLANDT PARK**, the Bronx: July 31. . . . **CUNNINGHAM PARK**, Queens: Aug. 1. . . . **PROSPECT PARK**, Brooklyn: Aug. 2. (Evenings at 8. For rain-date information, call 580-8700, ext. 227.) . . . **NOTE**: In a separate undertaking, the orchestra will present a "Horizons '90" concert of six recent compositions, including several premieres, conducted by Lawrence Leighton Smith. The performance follows two days of public rehearsal-symposiums, moderated by David Del Tredici, which will include conversations with the works' composers: Deborah Drattell, Edward Knight, Augusta Read Thomas, Daron Hagen, Michael

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MUSIC—Cont'd

Daugherty, and Olly Wilson. (Davis Hall, City College, Convent Ave. at 134th St. July 27 at 6:30. For information about concert tickets and symposium schedules, call 650-7100.)

NEW YORK CITY OPERA—The opening performance of the season, which runs through Nov. 18. **LE NOZZE DI FIGARO**, in a production by John Copley, with Renée Fleming, Maureen O'Flynn, Cynthia Rose, Dean Peterson, and William Stone; conducted by Scott Bergeson. (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. July 31 at 8.)

OUT OF TOWN

TANGLEWOOD—July 26 at 8:30: The Vermeer String Quartet performs a program of Haydn, Schumann, and Shostakovich. ... July 27 at 9: The Boston Symphony, with Roger Norrington on the podium, plays music by Haydn, Michael Tippett, and William Walton, and is joined by Joseph Silverstein for Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto. ... July 28 at 8:30: An evening of Tchaikovsky, with Valery Gergiev conducting the Boston Symphony in the Fifth Symphony and Garrick Ohlsson soloing in the First Piano Concerto. ... July 29 at 2:30: Valery Gergiev conducts the Boston Symphony in instrumental music from Wagner operas, and is joined by Claude Frank and Lilian Kallir for Mozart's Concerto in E-Flat for Two Pianos. (Lenox, Mass. For information about tickets, call 1-413 637-1940.)

CARAMOOR MUSIC FESTIVAL—July 26 at 4:15: The St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble performs Vivaldi, Schubert, and Martinu. ... July 27 at 9: A Telemann "sonata a quattro," Prokofiev's "Overture on Hebrew Themes," and Schubert's Octet, played by members of the St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble. ... July 28 at 8:30: Conductor Andrew Parrott leads the Orchestra of St. Luke's in orchestral music by William Boyce, Britten, Haydn, and Stravinsky, and is joined by Mischa Maisky for Haydn's Cello Concerto in C Major. ... July 29 at 5:30: Kazuhito Yamashita, classical guitarist, plays music by Fernando Sor and Toru Takemitsu, as well as his own transcriptions of Bach's D-Major Cello Suite and Mussorgsky's "Pictures at an Exhibition." (Katonah, N.Y. Buses for Caramoor will be at the Katonah station to meet trains leaving Grand Central on Saturdays at 2:50 and 5:30, and Sundays at 2:50. For information about tickets and trains, call 1-914 232-1252.)

NORFOLK CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL—July 27 at 8:30: An evening of chamber music by Mozart and Schumann, with, among others, pianists Claude Frank and Lilian Kallir. ... July 29 at 3: Horatio Parker's 1893 oratorio "Hora Novissima," performed by the Litchfield County Choral Union, four soloists, and an orchestra, and directed by Jonathan Babbitt. The program also includes instrumental variations by five contemporary composers on Robbins Battell's hymn "Sweet Is the Work." (Route 44, Norfolk, Conn. For information about tickets, call 1-203 542-5537. Through Aug. 4.)

WATERLOO FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA—Mendelssohn's "Elijah," with soprano Kaaren Erickson, mezzo-soprano Karen Brunssen, tenor Frederick Urey, and bass-baritone Terry Cook; the Pro Arte Choral; and the orchestra, directed by Gerard Schwarz. (Waterloo Village, Stanhope, N.J. 1-201 507-8900. July 28 at 8:30. Through Aug. 11.)

JAZZ / POP / ROCK
PERSONAL APPEARANCES

FLEETWOOD MAC—With the departure of Lindsey Buckingham from the lineup, Fleetwood Mac has lost the Beach Boys-like precision harmonies that have colored some of their best-known songs. Their new album, "Behind the Mask," has a few good tracks (mostly written by the high priestess of diaphanous rock, Stevie Nicks), but it sounds mighty dull in comparison with their earlier work. Still, their songs have aged well, and a soft, misty chorus of oohs and ahs can sound pleasant to cooing couples. One of the best bands in the world, Squeeze, opens. (Meadowlands Arena. 1-201 935-3900. July 24 at 8.)

AEROSMITH—The poor man's Rolling Stones have had a shaky recording career, with drug and personnel problems during many of their twenty years together. But 1987's gender-bender hit "Dude (Looks Like a Lady)"

proved that there was much life, and humor, in Aerosmith's successful bid at a major comeback. The thrilling vocalist Steven Tyler and the guitarist Joe Perry put together an album, "Pump," that was (no kidding) the best hard-rock'n' record of 1989. Aerosmith has inspired a whole generation of metal bands (including Guns n' Roses), and for sheer up-front brashness the group can't be beat. (Meadowlands Arena. July 26 at 8.)

"JAZZ IN JULY"—Final performances of the series. July 24: "Brilliant Corners: Thelonious Monk and Alec Wilder," with the Tommy Flanagan trio and the Big Apple octet. ... July 25: Vince Giordano and the Night Hawks and the Manhattan Rhythm Kings in a salute to big bands of the twenties and thirties. ... July 26: Walt Levinsky and the Great American Swing Band in another big-band tribute, this one featuring the music of Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw, Glenn Miller, and others. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440. Evenings at 8.)



Milli Vanilli at Jones Beach

SPORTS

HOME TEAMS

METS—Vs. the St. Louis Cardinals, July 26-27 at 7:35, July 28 at 1:05, and July 29 at 8:05. **YANKEES**—Vs. the Detroit Tigers, July 30-Aug. 2 at 7:30. (Home base for the Mets is Shea Stadium, 1-718 507-8499; and for the Yankees, Yankee Stadium, 293-6000.)

RACING

HORSES—At Belmont: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1. The Sword Dancer is on July 28. Through July 30. ... At Saratoga Springs: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1, from Aug. 1 through Aug. 27. ... At Monmouth Park, Oceanport, N.J.: Weekdays at 1:30. The Haskell Invitational is on July 28. ... At the Atlantic City Race Course: Mondays and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 7:25. ... **TROTTING** at Yonkers Raceway: Weeknights at 8, and Tuesdays at 1. ... At the Meadowlands: Weeknights at 7:30. Through Aug. 18. ... At Saratoga Raceway, Saratoga Springs: Mondays through Saturdays at 7:45.

NEW YORK TRACK AND FIELD GAMES—The second world-class outdoor invitational within the city's limits. With, among others, Jackie Joyner-Kersey, Gail Devers-Roberts, Carl Lewis, and Joe Falcon. (Columbia University's Wien Stadium, Baker Field, Broadway at 218th St. July 29 at 3. For information about tickets, call 860-4455.)

THE GREAT OUTDOORS

WALKS IN THE PARK—On July 25, join Sarah Elliott for a group inspection of Central Park's winged inhabitants—dragonflies, butterflies, pigeons, etc. Meet at the Vanderbilt Gate (Fifth Ave. at 105th St.) at 6. ... On July 28, at 11:45, naturalist Steve Brill will lead a tour focussing on the Park's edible plants. For reservations, call 1-718 291-6825.

BUDDY GUY—A "Musicruise" concert on a Circle

Line boat. (Pier 81, Twelfth Ave. at 41st St. July 27; boarding starts at 7 and 9:30. For information about tickets, call 956-5550.)

DAVID BOWIE—With Joe Satriani. (Giants Stadium, the Meadowlands. 1-201 935-3900. July 29 at 7:30.)

PIER 84—July 24: Bad Company, with Damn Yankees. ... July 27: B. B. King, with Johnny Winter. ... July 30: At one time or another, the **MOODY BLUES** were underground, psychedelic, progressive, and even (gulp) fashionable. Most of that ended by 1973. Their best albums ("A Question of Balance," "Threshold of a Dream") were a blend of cosmic lyricism and Mellotron-induced romanticism. They fancied themselves pop philosophers, and for many fans who sat up late into the night grooving to their albums and searching for "oneness," they were. The Moodies have had a few undistinguished hit records in the eighties, and they sound pretty good live, but their music has little power now. (Twelfth Ave. at 43rd St. Evenings at 7:30. For information about tickets, call 247-4777.)

SOUTH STREET SEAPORT—July 25 at 6:30: Their first single, "Come and Get These Memories," was released in 1963, and **MARTHA REEVES & THE VANDELLAS** more than delivered on that offer over the next decade, with songs like "Heat Wave," "Jimmy Mack," "Nowhere to Run," and that great summer song with perhaps the biggest Big Beat of all, "Dancing in the Street." It still doesn't matter what you wear, just as long as you are there. ... July 26 at 6:30: The Fabulous Thunderbirds. ... July 28 at 8: The Empire Brass. ... Aug. 1 at 6:30: The Party Dolls. (Pier 16, East River at Fulton St. No tickets necessary. For rain-date information, call 669-9424.)

WORLD FINANCIAL CENTER—July 25 at 7:30: The Artie Shaw orchestra. ... Aug. 1 at 7:30: Panama Francis and his Savoy Sultans. (Battery Park City. No tickets necessary.)

"MIDSUMMER NIGHT SWING"—

Evenings of dancing by the fountain in Lincoln Center Plaza. July 25: Tito Puente. ... July 26: Bruce Dairemont. ... July 27: Ed Polcer and the Condon Reunion Band. ... July 28: Illinois Jacquet. (Evenings at 9. Admission at the gate on the nights of the dances.)

CENTRAL PARK SUMMERSTAGE—July 26 at 7:30: Vincent La Selva conducts the New York Grand Opera in a performance of "Turandot." ... July 27 at 8:30: Jamaica Kincaid reads from her own fiction, and Philip Levine reads from his own poetry. ... July 28 at 3: Shinehead and Pato Banton. ... July 29 at 3: Bootsy Collins and his Rubber Band, and Annabouboula. (Rumsey Playground, mid-Park at 72nd St. No tickets necessary. For rain-date information, call 360-2777.)

JONES BEACH THEATRE—July 27: **BONNIE RAITT** has the sweet, rough voice of a woman wronged. Back in 1969, Raitt left Radcliffe to sing the blues, and was subsequently seen with the likes of Jackson Browne and Sippie Wallace. Then she dropped out of sight. Now middle-aged, Raitt is back with songs about babies and aging parents, but she's still the baddest good white girl ever. ... July 28: The popularity of the duo **MILLI VANILLI**, who don't write or produce any of their material, is mystifying. They sing phonetically, wear mildly pervy tights under Star Trek-like uniforms, and dance like deaf aerobics instructors. In concert, their songs, a lame hybrid of Euro-pop and hip-hop, sound dubbed; on record, the tunes are so weak they have to be helped off the turntable. Yet six million somebodies bought copies of their debut album. Suckers! With Young MC and Seduction. ... July 31-Aug. 1: Fleetwood Mac, with Squeeze. (1-516 221-1000. Evenings at 8.)

LINCOLN CENTER OUT-OF-DOORS—The American Ballroom Theatre, in the opening performance of a music, dance, and theatre festival that will run through Aug. 27. (Damrosch Park, Lincoln Center. Aug. 1 at 8:15. No tickets necessary.)

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

EAST SIDE

ANGELIKA FILM CENTER, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000)

Theatre 1: "Jesus of Montreal" (directed by Denys Arcand; in French), with Lothaire Bluteau.

Theatre 2: "The Cook, the Thief, His Wife & Her Lover" (†).

Theatre 3: "The Unbelievable Truth" (Hal Hartley), with Robert Burke, Adrienne Shelly, and Christopher Cooke.

Theatre 4: "Without You I'm Nothing" (John Boskovich), with Sandra Bernhard.

Theatre 5: "How to Make Love to a Negro Without Getting Tired" (Jacques W. Benoit; in French), with Isaach De Bankolé.

Theatre 6: "Quick Change" (†).

PUBLIC THEATRE, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)

July 24: "The Rules of the Game" (1939, Jean Renoir; in French), with Marcel Dalio and Nora Gregor; "French Cancan" (1954, Renoir; in French), with Jean Gabin, Maria Felix, Françoise Arnoul, and Edith Piaf; and "The River" (1951, Renoir), with Nora Swinburne, Arthur Shields, Radha, Esmond Knight, and Adrienne Corri.

July 25-26: "The Rules of the Game"; "The Elusive Corporal" (1962, Jean Renoir; in French), with Jean-Pierre Cassel and Claude Brasseur; and "Picnic on the Grass" (1959, Renoir; in French), with Paul Meurisse and Catherine Rouvel.

July 27-28: "The Rules of the Game"; "The Little Match Girl" (1928, Jean Renoir; silent); and "Toni" (1935, Renoir; in French), with Charles Blavette.

July 29 and 31: "The Rules of the Game"; "The Testament of Dr. Cordelier" (1959, Jean Renoir; in French), with Jean-Louis Barrault; and "La Bête Humaine" (1938, Renoir; in French), with Jean Gabin, Simone Simon, Carlette, Fernand Ledoux, Blanchette Brunoy, and Renoir.

From Aug. 1: "The Rules of the Game"; "This Land Is Mine" (1943, Jean Renoir), with Maureen O'Hara, Charles Laughton, George Sanders, and Walter Slezak; and "Swamp Water" (1941, Renoir), with Walter Huston, Walter Brennan, Anne Baxter, Dana Andrews, Virginia Gilmore, and John Carradine.

MOVIELAND 8TH STREET TRIPLEX, 36 E. 8th (477-6600)

Theatre 1: Through July 26: "Total Recall" (†). From July 27: "The Freshman" (†).

Theatre 2: Through July 26: "Days of Thunder" (†). From July 27: "Presumed Innocent" (Alan J. Pakula), with Harrison Ford, Brian Dennehy, and Raul Julia.

Theatre 3: "The Adventures of Ford Fairlane" (Renny Harlin), with Andrew Dice Clay, Wayne Newton, Priscilla Presley, and Ed O'Neill.

BIJOU CINEMA, 3rd Ave. between 12th and 13th. (505-7320)

"Die Hard 2" (Renny Harlin), with Bruce Willis, Bonnie Bedelia, William Sadler, John Amos, Dennis Franz, and Fred Dalton Thompson.

LOEWS 19TH STREET EAST 6, B'way at 19th. (260-8000)

Theatre 1: "Days of Thunder" (†).

Theatre 2: "Total Recall" (†).

Theatre 3: "Ghost" (†).

Theatre 4: Through July 26: "RoboCop 2" (Irvin Kershner), with Peter Weller and Nancy Allen. From July 27: "Presumed Innocent" (Alan J. Pakula), with Harrison Ford, Brian Dennehy, and Raul Julia.

Theatre 5: "Navy SEALs" (Lewis Teague), with Charlie Sheen and Michael Biehn.

Theatre 6: "Arachnophobia" (Frank Marshall), with Jeff Daniels, Julian Sands, Harley Jane Kozak, and John Goodman.

GRAMERCY, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)

"Dick Tracy" (†).

BAV CINEMA, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)

"Die Hard 2" (Renny Harlin), with Bruce Willis, Bonnie Bedelia, William Sadler, John Amos, Dennis Franz, and Fred Dalton Thompson.

LOEWS 34TH STREET SHOWPLACE, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)

Theatre 1: "Ghost" (†).

Theatre 2: "Days of Thunder" (†).

Theatre 3: "Navy SEALs" (Lewis Teague), with Charlie Sheen and Michael Biehn.

34TH ST. EAST, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)

THE MOVIE HOUSES

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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 20.



Eric Rohmer, Claude Chabrol, and François Truffaut dismissed it; Graham Greene praised it. Alfred Hitchcock's 1936 "Sabotage" (playing July 26 at Theatre 80 St. Marks) could be described as a Hitchcock film for people who don't like Hitchcock cultists like it, too. This spare, harrowing adaptation of Joseph Conrad's "The Secret Agent" is the most character-oriented and emotionally daring of the director's early thrillers. It's about espionage as shabby-genteel terrorism. Oscar Homolka and Sylvia Sidney are touchingly incongruous as man and wife—Mr. and Mrs. Verloc, who manage an East London movie theatre and care for Mrs. Verloc's younger brother, Stevie (Desmond Tester). The young, pretty, sensitive Mrs. Verloc has married for the security her husband provides Stevie and herself. That's why it's so heartbreaking and ironic that the deceptively phlegmatic Mr. Verloc is a saboteur.

A Scotland Yard investigator (John Loder) takes a cover job at the greengrocer's next to the movie theatre and ends up falling in love with Mrs. Verloc. But "Sabotage" is an anti-romantic suspense film. In the United States it was called "A Woman Alone," and for once an American title is apt—Mrs. Verloc learns just how nightmarish a marriage of compromise can be. The movie deserves to be seen fresh, without having its surprises revealed and then analyzed to death. Hitchcock creates an atmosphere of booby-trapped claustrophobia: the characters release their secret hatreds and ambitions in terrifying spasms and explosions. The killings don't offer audiences the usual cathartic genre thrills; instead, they deepen our identification with Mrs. Verloc. This film is as wrenching as it is eruptive. Hitchcock never went further beyond Pop than he did in "Sabotage."

Through July 26: "The Adventures of Ford Fairlane" (Renny Harlin), with Andrew Dice Clay, Wayne Newton, Priscilla Presley, and Ed O'Neill.

From July 27: "Presumed Innocent" (Alan J. Pakula), with Harrison Ford, Brian Dennehy, and Raul Julia.

EASTSIDE CINEMA, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)

"The Unbelievable Truth" (Hal Hartley), with Robert Burke, Adrienne Shelly, and Christopher Cooke.

SUTTON 1 AND 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (475-1411)

Theatre 1: "Pretty Woman" (†).

Theatre 2: "Arachnophobia" (Frank Marshall), with Jeff Daniels, Julian Sands, Harley Jane Kozak, and John Goodman.

GOTHAM CINEMA, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)

Through July 31: "The Adventures of Ford Fairlane" (Renny Harlin), with Andrew Dice Clay, Wayne Newton, Priscilla Presley, and Ed O'Neill.

From Aug. 1: "Young Guns II" (Geoff Murphy), with Emilio Estevez, Kiefer Sutherland, Lou Diamond Phillips, and Christian Slater.

PLAZA, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)

Through July 26: "The Misadventures of Mr. Wilt" (Michael Tuchner), with Mel Smith and Griff Rhys Jones.

From July 27: "Chicago Joe and the Showgirl" (Bernard Rose), with Kiefer Sutherland and Emily Lloyd.

MANHATTAN TWIN, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)

Theatre 1: "Days of Thunder" (†).

Theatre 2: "Another 48 Hrs." (Walter Hill), with Eddie Murphy, Nick Nolte, Brian James, Ed O'Ross, Bernie Casey, and Tisha Campbell.

59TH STREET EAST CINEMA, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)

"Gremlins 2 The New Batch" (†).

BARONET AND CORONET, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)

Theatre 1: "Die Hard 2" (Renny Harlin), with Bruce Willis, Bonnie Bedelia, William Sadler, John Amos, Dennis Franz, and Fred Dalton Thompson.

Theatre 2: "Die Hard 2."

CINEMA I, CINEMA II, AND CINEMA 3RD AVENUE, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)

Theatre 1: "Dick Tracy" (†).

Theatre 2: "Quick Change" (†).

Theatre 3: "The Jungle Book" (1967), a full-length Walt Disney cartoon.

GEMINI I AND 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)

Theatre 1: "Total Recall" (†).

Theatre 2: "The Freshman" (†).

BEEKMAN, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)

Through July 26: "Ghost Dad" (Sidney Poitier), with Bill Cosby.

From July 27: "Problem Child" (Dennis Dugan), with John Ritter.

LOEWS NEW YORK TWIN, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)

Theatre 1: "Navy SEALs" (Lewis Teague), with Charlie Sheen and Michael Biehn.

Theatre 2: "RoboCop 2" (Irvin Kershner), with Peter Weller and Nancy Allen.

68TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)

Through July 26: "Betsy's Wedding" (Alan Alda), with Alda, Madeline Kahn, Joe Pesci, and Molly Ringwald.

From July 27: "Presumed Innocent" (Alan J. Pakula), with Harrison Ford, Brian Dennehy, and Raul Julia.

LOEWS TOWER EAST, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)

"Ghost" (†).

U. A. EAST, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)

"Days of Thunder" (†).

PARK & 86TH STREET CINEMAS, 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)

Theatre 1: "The Adventures of Ford Fairlane" (Renny Harlin), with Andrew Dice Clay, Wayne Newton, Priscilla Presley, and Ed O'Neill.

Theatre 2: "Die Hard 2" (Renny Harlin), with Bruce Willis, Bonnie Bedelia, William Sadler, John Amos, Dennis Franz, and Fred Dalton Thompson.

86TH STREET EAST TWIN, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)

Theatre 1: "Quick Change" (†).

Theatre 2: "Arachnophobia" (Frank Marshall), with Jeff Daniels, Julian Sands, Harley Jane Kozak, and John Goodman.

WEST SIDE

BLEECKER STREET CINEMA I AND 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)

Theatre 1: July 24: "The Stationmaster's Wife" (1977, directed by Rainer Werner Fassbinder; in German), with Kurt Raab.

... ♪ July 25-26: "The Merchant of Four Seasons" (1971, Fassbinder; in German), with Hans Hirschmüller.

... ♪ July 27-29: "The Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant" (1972, Fassbinder; in German).

... ♪ July 30-31: "Chinese Roulette" (1977, Fassbinder; in German), with Margit Carstensen; and "Why Does Herr R. Run Amok?" (1970, Fassbinder; in German), with Raab, Lilith Ungerer, and Hanna Schygulla.

... ♪ From Aug. 1: "Ali: Fear



Marlon Brando in "The Freshman"

Eats the Soul" (1974, Fassbinder; in German), with Brigitte Mira.

Theatre 2: Through July 26: (Separate admissions) "The Big Dis" (Gordon Eriksen and John O'Brien); and "Monsieur Hire" (directed by Patrice Leconte; in French), with Michel Blanc. From July 27: "Men in Love" (Marc Huestis).

WAVERLY 1 AND 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "Navy SEALs" (Lewis Teague), with Charlie Sheen and Michael Biehn.
Theatre 2: "Die Hard 2" (Renny Harlin), with Bruce Willis.

8TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515)
"Arachnophobia" (Frank Marshall), with Jeff Daniels.

ART GREENWICH TWIN, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: Through July 26: (Matinées only) "Jetsons: The Movie" (William Hanna and Joseph Barbera), an animated film; and (evenings only) "Another 48 Hrs." (Walter Hill), with Eddie Murphy, Nick Nolte, Brian James, Ed O'Ross, Bernie Casey, and Tisha Campbell. From July 27: "Problem Child" (Dennis Dugan), with John Ritter.
Theatre 2: "Ghost" (†).

QUAD CINEMA, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Dick Tracy" (†).
Theatre 2: "Tie Me Up! Tie Me Down!" (†).
Theatre 3: "Cinema Paradiso" (Giuseppe Tornatore; in Italian), with Philippe Noiret and Salvatore Cascio.
Theatre 4: (Matinées only) "The Jungle Book" (1967), a full-length Walt Disney cartoon; and (evenings only) "Pretty Woman" (†).

CHELSEA CINEMAS, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)
Theatre 1: Through July 26: "Ghost Dad" (Sidney Poitier), with Bill Cosby. From July 27: "Problem Child" (Dennis Dugan), with John Ritter.
Theatre 2: "Gremlins 2 The New Batch" (†).
Theatre 3: "Back to the Future Part III" (†).
Theatre 4: "Die Hard 2" (Renny Harlin), with Bruce Willis.
Theatre 5: "Die Hard 2."
Theatre 6: "Longtime Companion" (†).
Theatre 7: "Quick Change" (†).
Theatre 8: "The Adventures of Ford Fairlane" (Renny Harlin), with Andrew Dice Clay.
Theatre 9: "The Adventures of Ford Fairlane."

23RD ST. WEST TRIPLEX, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "The Jungle Book" (1967), a full-length Walt Disney cartoon.
Theatre 2: "Pretty Woman" (†).
Theatre 3: "Jetsons: The Movie" (William Hanna and Joseph Barbera), an animated film.

GUILD, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"Jungle Book" (1967), a full-length Walt Disney cartoon.

WORLDWIDE CINEMAS, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)
Theatre 1: Through July 26: "Ghost Dad" (Sidney Poitier), with Bill Cosby. From July 27: "Problem Child" (Dennis Dugan), with John Ritter.

Theatre 2: "The Adventures of Ford Fairlane" (Renny Harlin), with Andrew Dice Clay, Wayne Newton, Priscilla Presley, and Ed O'Neill.

Theatre 3: "Betsy's Wedding" (Alan Alda), with Alda, Madeline Kahn, Joe Pesci, and Molly Ringwald.

Theatre 4: "Jetsons: The Movie" (William Hanna and Joseph Barbera), an animated film.

Theatre 5: (Matinées only) "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles" (†); and (evenings only) "The Cook, the Thief, His Wife & Her Lover" (†).

Theatre 6: "Pretty Woman" (†).

ZIEGFELD, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Days of Thunder" (†).

57TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"Betsy's Wedding" (Alan Alda), with Alda, Madeline Kahn, Joe Pesci, and Molly Ringwald.

CARNEGIE HALL CINEMA, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
"Longtime Companion" (†).

CARNEGIE SCREENING ROOM, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (757-2131)
Through July 26: "Jesus of Montreal" (Denys Arcand; in French), with Lothaire Bluteau. From July 27: "Men in Love" (Marc Huestis).

PARIS, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
"Life Is a Long Quiet River" (Etienne Chatiliez; in French).

CINEMA 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"Jetsons: The Movie" (William Hanna and Joseph Barbera), an animated film.

LOEWS PARAMOUNT, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Ghost" (†).

62ND & BROADWAY, 62 W. 62nd. (265-7466)
"The Adventures of Ford Fairlane" (Renny Harlin), with Andrew Dice Clay, Wayne Newton, Priscilla Presley, and Ed O'Neill.

LINCOLN PLAZA 1, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Tie Me Up! Tie Me Down!" (†).
Theatre 2: "Cinema Paradiso" (Giuseppe Tornatore; in Italian), with Philippe Noiret and Salvatore Cascio.
Theatre 3: "May Fools" (†).

REGENCY, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
"Total Recall" (†).

LOEWS 84TH STREET SIXPLEX, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "Arachnophobia" (Frank Marshall), with Jeff Daniels, Julian Sands, Harley Jane Kozak, and John Goodman.
Theatre 2: "The Freshman" (†).
Theatre 3: "Dick Tracy" (†).
Theatre 4: "Quick Change" (†).
Theatre 5: Through July 26: "Days of Thunder" (†). From July 27: "Presumed Innocent" (Alan J. Pakula), with Harrison Ford, Brian Dennehy, and Raul Julia.
Theatre 6: "Navy SEALs" (Lewis Teague), with Charlie Sheen and Michael Biehn.

METRO CINEMA 1 AND 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: Through July 26: (Matinées only) "Jetsons: The Movie" (William Hanna and Joseph Barbera), an animated film; and (evenings only) "Another 48 Hrs." (Walter Hill), with Eddie Murphy, Nick Nolte, Brian James, Ed O'Ross, Bernie Casey, and Tisha Campbell. From July 27: "Problem Child" (Dennis Dugan), with John Ritter.
Theatre 2: (Matinées only) "The Jungle Book" (1967), a full-length Walt Disney cartoon; and (evenings only) "Pretty Woman" (†).

OLYMPIA I AND II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: "Die Hard 2" (Renny Harlin), with Bruce Willis, Bonnie Bedelia, William Sadler, John Amos, Dennis Franz, and Fred Dalton Thompson.
Theatre 2: "Die Hard 2."

TIMES SQUARE AREA

CRITERION CENTER, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "Total Recall" (†).
Theatre 2: "Gremlins 2 The New Batch" (†).
Theatre 3: Through July 26: "Gremlins 2 The New Batch" (†). From July 27: "The Freshman" (†).
Theatre 4: "Die Hard 2" (directed by Renny Harlin), with Bruce Willis, Bonnie Bedelia, William Sadler, John Amos, Dennis Franz, and Fred Dalton Thompson.
Theatre 5: Through July 26: "Die Hard 2." From July 27: "Presumed Innocent" (Alan J. Pakula), with Harrison Ford.
Theatre 6: Through July 26: "Total Recall" (†). From July 27: "The Freshman" (†).

EMBASSY I, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)
"Dick Tracy" (†).

EMBASSY 2, 3, AND 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 1: "Arachnophobia" (Frank Marshall), with Jeff Daniels.
Theatre 2: "RoboCop 2" (Irvin Kershner), with Peter Weller and Nancy Allen.
Theatre 3: "Navy SEALs" (Lewis Teague), with Charlie Sheen and Michael Biehn.

LOEWS ASTOR PLAZA, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
"Another 48 Hrs." (Walter Hill), with Eddie Murphy and Nick Nolte.

NATIONAL TWIN, B'way at 44th. (969-0950)
Theatre 1: "The Adventures of Ford Fairlane" (Renny Harlin), with Andrew Dice Clay.
Theatre 2: Through July 26: "Ghost Dad" (Sidney Poitier), with Bill Cosby. From July 27: "Problem Child" (Dennis Dugan), with John Ritter.

WEST SIDE CINEMA 1 AND 2, 7th Ave. at 48th. (398-1720)
Theatre 1: "Quick Change" (†).
Theatre 2: (Matinées only) "The Jungle Book" (1967), a full-length Walt Disney cartoon; and (evenings only) "Quick Change" (†).

REVIVAL HOUSES

BIOGRAPH CINEMA, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)
July 23: "Dr. Ehrlich's Magic Bullet" (1940, directed by William Dieterle), with Edward G. Robinson, Ruth Gordon, Otto Kruger, and Maria Ouspenskaya; and "Our Vines Have Tender Grapes" (1945, Roy Rowland), with Robinson, Margaret O'Brien, and James Craig.

July 24-25: "Annie Oakley" (1935, George Stevens), with Barbara Stanwyck and Preston Foster; and "Banjo on My Knee" (1936, John Cromwell), with Stanwyck, Joel McCrea, and Walter Brennan.

July 26-28: "Remember the Night" (1940, Mitchell Leisen), with Barbara Stanwyck, Fred MacMurray, and Beulah Bondi; and "Ball of Fire" (1942, Howard Hawks), with Stanwyck and Gary Cooper.

July 29-30: "Barbary Coast" (†); and "Silver Dollar" (1932, Alfred E. Green), with Edward G. Robinson, Bebe Daniels, and Aline MacMahon.

July 31-Aug. 1: "Cry Wolf" (1947, Peter Godfrey), with Errol Flynn, Barbara Stanwyck, Geraldine Brooks, and Richard Basehart; and "The File on Thelma Jordan" (†).

CINEMA VILLAGE, 22 W. 12th. (924-3363)
Through July 24: "Tucker: The Man and His Dream" (1988, Francis Ford Coppola), with Jeff Bridges, Joan Allen, Martin Landau, and Frederic Forrester; and "The Betsy" (1978, Daniel Petrie), with Laurence Olivier, Robert Duvall, Katharine Ross, Tommy Lee Jones, Paul Rudd, and Jane Alexander.

July 25-26: "Carnival of Souls" (1962, Herk Harvey); and "The Haunting" (1963, Robert Wise), with Julie Harris, Claire Bloom, Richard Johnson, and Russ Tamblyn.

July 27-28: "Female Trouble" (1975, John Waters), with Divine; and "Desperate Living" (1977, Waters), with Edith Massey, Mink Stole, and Mary Vivian Pearce.

July 29: "The Last Metro" (1981, François Truffaut; in French), with Catherine Deneuve, Gérard Philipe, and Jean Poiret; and "The Woman Next Door" (1981, Truffaut; in French), with Deneuve and Fanny Ardant.

July 30-31: "My Hustler" (1967, Andy Warhol); and "Nude Restaurant" (1967, Warhol), with Viva and Taylor Meade.

From Aug. 1: "The Lair of the White Worm" (1988, Ken Russell); and "The Rainbow" (1989, Russell), with Sammi Davis.

THALIA SoHo, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498)
Through July 24: "Loves of a Blonde" (1965, Miloš Forman; a Czech film); and "Sign of the Virgin" (1969, Zbynek Brynych; a Czech film).

July 25-26: "Nuns on the Run" (1990, Jonathan Lynn), with Eric Idle and Robbie Coltrane; and "Bedazzled" (1967, Stanley Donen), with Peter Cook, Dudley Moore, and Eleanor Bron.

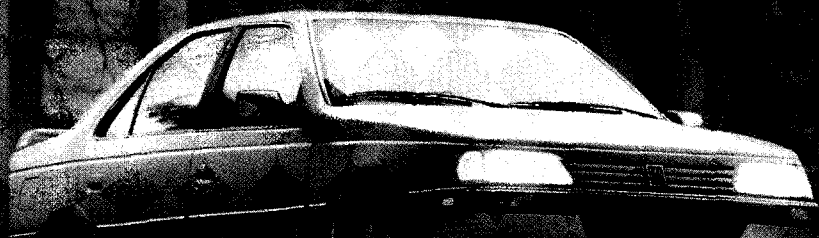
July 27-28: "Enemies, A Love Story" (†) and "Next Stop, Greenwich Village" (†).

July 29: "That Obscure Object of Desire" (1977, Luis Buñuel; in French), with Fernando Ray, Carole Bouquet, and Angela Molina; and "Viridiana" (1961, Buñuel; in Spanish), with Francisco Rabal.

July 30-31: "5 Against the House" (1955, Phil Karlson), with Guy Madison, Kim Novak, Brian Keith, Kerwin Mathews, and

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MOVIE HOUSES—Cont'd

- William Conrad; and "Pushover" (1954, Richard Quine), with Fred MacMurray, Phil Carey, Novak, Dorothy Malone, and E. G. Marshall.
- From Aug. 1: "The Reckless Moment" (1949, Max Ophüls), with James Mason, Joan Bennett, and Geraldine Brooks; and "Laura" (1944, Otto Preminger), with Gene Tierney, Clifton Webb, Dana Andrews, Vincent Price, and Judith Anderson.
- THEATRE 80 ST. MARKS, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)**
- July 23: "Jean de Florette" (1985, Claude Berri; in French), with Yves Montand, Gérard Depardieu, Elisabeth Depardieu, and Daniele Auteuil; and "Manon of the Spring" (1987, Berri; in French), with Montand, Auteuil, and Emmanuelle Béart.
- July 24: "Ninotchka" (1939, Ernst Lubitsch), with Greta Garbo, Melvyn Douglas, Ina Claire, Bela Lugosi, Felix Bressart, and Sig Rumann; and "Grand Hotel" (1932, Edmund Goulding), with Greta Garbo, John Barrymore, Joan Crawford, Lewis Stone, Jean Hersholt, and Wallace Beery.
- July 25: "Murder in the Cathedral" (1952, George Hoellering), with Father John Grashner and Niall Mac Ginnis; and "Marat/Sade" (1967, Peter Brook), performed by the Royal Shakespeare Company.
- July 26: "Blackmail" (1929, Alfred Hitchcock), with Anny Ondra, Cyril Ritchard, and Sara Allgood; and "Sabotage" (see page 17).
- July 27-28: "All About Eve" (1950, Joseph L. Mankiewicz), with Bette Davis, Anne Baxter, George Sanders, Hugh Marlowe, Celeste Holm, and Thelma Ritter; and "Sunset Boulevard" (†).
- July 29: "Band of Outsiders" (1964, Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Anna Karina, Sami Frey, and Charles Brasseur; and "Breathless" (1959, Godard; in French), with Jean Seberg and Jean-Paul Belmondo.
- July 30: "The Last Metro" (1981, François Truffaut; in French), with Catherine Deneuve, Gérard Depardieu, and Jean Poiret; and "The Woman Next Door" (1981, Truffaut; in French), with Depardieu and Fanny Ardant.
- July 31: "Love Me Tonight" (1932, Rouben Mamoulian), with Maurice Chevalier, Jeanette MacDonald, Myrna Loy, and Charlie Ruggles; and "One Hour with You" (1932, Ernst Lubitsch), with Chevalier, MacDonald, Genevieve Tobin, and Roland Young.
- Aug. 1: "Persona" (1967, Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish), with Bibi Andersson, Gunnar Björnstrand, and Liv Ullmann; and "The Seventh Seal" (†).

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490)—July 23 at noon: "Laura" (1944, directed by Otto Preminger), with Gene Tierney.... July 23 at 3: "Heaven Can Wait" (1943, Ernst Lubitsch), with Don Ameche.... July 23 at 6: "Leave Her to Heaven" (1945, John M. Stahl), with Gene Tierney.... July 24 at noon: "Fallen Angel" (1945, Otto Preminger), with Alice Faye, Dana Andrews, and Linda Darnell.... July 24 at 3: "Winged Victory" (1944, George Cukor), with Lon McCallister, Edmond O'Brien, Jeanne Crain, and Judy Holliday.... July 24 at 6 and July 26 at noon: "Hangover Square" (1945, John Brahm), with Laird Cregar, Linda Darnell, and George Sanders.... July 26 at 3: "A Tree Grows in Brooklyn" (1945, Elia Kazan), with Dorothy McGuire, Peggy Ann Garner, James Dunn, and Joan Blondell.... July 26 at 6: "Fallen Angel".... July 27 at noon: "A Walk in the Sun" (1945, Lewis Milestone), with Dana Andrews, Richard Conte, and Lloyd Bridges.... July 27 at 3: "The Dark Corner" (1946, Henry Hathaway), with Lucille Ball, Clifton Webb, and Mark Stevens.... July 27 at 6: "Anna and the King of Siam" (1946, John Cromwell), with Irene Dunne, Rex Harrison, and Linda Darnell.... July 28 at noon: "A Tree Grows in Brooklyn".... July 28 at 2:30: "Leave Her to Heaven".... July 28 at 5: "Captain from Castile" (1947, Henry King), with Tyrone Power, Jean Peters, Cesar Romero, and Lee J. Cobb.... July 29 at noon: "Anna and the King of Siam".... July 29 at 2:30: "A Walk in the Sun".... July 29 at 5: "Heaven Can Wait".... July 30 at noon: "Cry of the City" (1948, Robert Siodmak), with Victor Mature, Richard Conte, and Shelley Winters.... July 30 at 3: "My

Darling Clementine" (1946, John Ford), with Henry Fonda, Victor Mature, and Linda Darnell.... July 30 at 6: "The Dark Corner".... July 31 at noon: "Mother Wore Tights" (1947, Walter Lang), with Betty Grable, Dan Dailey, and Mona Freeman.... July 31 at 3: "The Razor's Edge" (1946, Edmund Goulding), with Tyrone Power, Gene Tierney, Anne Baxter, and Clifton Webb.... July 31 at 6: "Cry of the City."

FLORENCE GOULD HALL, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—July 25 at 12:30 and 6: "Four Bags Full" (1956, Claude Autant-Lara; in French), with Jean Gabin, Bourvil, Louis de Funès, and Jeannette Batti.... July 25 at 3:15 and 8:45: "Rendez-vous with Tomorrow" (1949, Jacques Becker; in French), with Daniel Gelin, Nicole Courcel, Maurice Ronet, and Brigitte Auber.... Aug. 1 at 12:30 and 6: "Doulos—The Finger Man" (1962, Jean-Pierre Melville; in French), with Jean-Paul Belmondo, Serge Reggiani, Jean Desailly, and Michel Piccoli.... Aug. 1 at 3:15 and 8:45: "Pickpocket" (1959, Robert Bresson; in French), with Martin Lassalle, Marika Green, Jean Pélégri, and Dolly Scal.

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (570-3949)—July 27 at 7: "The Damned" (1969, Luchino Visconti; in Italian), with Dirk Bogarde, Ingrid Thulin, and Helmut Berger.... July 29 at 4 and 6:30: "La Vie Est Belle" (1987, Benoit Lamy and Ngangura Mweze; made in Zaire, in French).... July 28 at 7: "Dodes-kaden" (1971, Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese).

CATHEDRAL OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. (662-2133)—July 25 at 8: "Nosferatu" (1922, F. W. Murnau; silent), with Max Schreck.... Aug. 1 at 8: "Tramp, Tramp, Tramp" (1926, Harry Edwards, silent), with Harry Langdon. Organ accompaniment written and directed by Lee Erwin.

ADAM CLAYTON POWELL, JR., STATE OFFICE BUILDING, 163 W. 125th St. (873-5040)—July 26 at 6: "School Daze" (1988, Spike Lee), with Larry Fishburne, Giancarlo Esposito, Lee, and Ossie Davis; and "Sugar Cane Alley" (1983, Euzhan Palcy).... July 27 at 1, 4:25, and 7:45: "Foxy Brown" (1974, Jack Hill), with Pam Grier, Peter Brown, and Terry Carter; and "Three the Hard Way" (1974, Gordon Parks, Jr.), with Jim Brown, Fred Williamson, and Jim Kelly.... Aug. 1 at 1, 4, and 7: "Glory" (1989, Edward Zwick), with Denzel Washington, Morgan Freeman, and Matthew Broderick.

ANTHOLOGY FILM ARCHIVES, 32-34 Second Ave., at Second St. (477-2714)—July 26-29 at 8: "No Picnic" (1987, Philip Hartman).... July 26 at 9:30 and July 29 at 6: "Video & the Law" (1990, Clayton Patterson).... July 27-29 at 9:30: "Hank Williams—The Show He Never Gave" (1982, David Acomba).



Bruce Willis in "Die Hard 2"

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.

IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael and Terrence Rafferty.)

BACK TO THE FUTURE PART III—The last installment of the "Back to the Future" series brings the story of the suburban kid Marty McFly (Michael J. Fox) and the mad inventor Doc Brown (Christopher Lloyd) to a graceful, almost leisurely conclusion. Most of the picture takes place in 1885, in the Old West, where the specially rigged DeLorean that has been whipping Marty and Doc back and forth in time runs out of gas. Stalled in a Western, these time travellers from the manic, jumped-up nineteen-eighties adjust their internal clocks and do what characters in Westerns do: they wait. The movie settles into a deliberate and rather soothing rhythm, as if the filmmakers—director Robert Zemeckis and writer Bob Gale—knew there was no point in getting themselves, and us, all het up. The relaxing light-vaudeville mood is a welcome break from the strenuous time-hopping of the first two installments. (It's poky, and it's also a touch boring.) While Zemeckis and Gale are biding their

time, setting things up for their frantic grand finale, they keep us amused with an eccentric romance between Doc and a schoolmarm played by Mary Steenburgen. Lloyd and Steenburgen are hilariously well matched—they have perfectly compatible styles of celestial goofiness—and their moonbeam love story is the movie's one true inspiration. Also with Thomas F. Wilson.—T.R. (Reviewed in our issue of 6/18/90.) (Chelsea Cinemas.)

BARBARY COAST (1935)—A lavish, unconvincing re-creation of San Francisco's vice dens in the eighteen-fifties. The picture was designed as a showcase for Edward G. Robinson's talents, and he gives a juicy performance as a lovable gangland boss. But the material is too false and studied—and too polite. Miriam Hopkins is Swan, the disillusioned queen of the Coast, who presides over a crooked roulette wheel; Joel McCrea courts her with a volume of Shelley. Howard Hawks directed, from a script by Hecht and MacArthur, and there's plenty of action, but you feel as if you've seen it all before. With Walter Brennan, Frank Craven, Brian Donlevy, Donald Meek, and,

in a bit part, David Niven.—P.K. (Biograph Cinema; July 29-30.)

THE COOK, THE THIEF, HIS WIFE & HER LOVER—A movie about a crude British thug, Albert Spica (Michael Gambon), whose favorite method of terrorizing people is ramming things down their throats. Albert himself eats only haute cuisine; he and his wife (Helen Mirren) dine every night at a posh restaurant called Le Hollandais. This is an Art Movie, refined and terribly formal; the director, Peter Greenaway (who also wrote the script), places this barbarian smack in the middle of "painterly" compositions and encourages us to see him as a steaming hunk of offal desecrating the beauty of an artist's creation. He looks at Albert with the disdainful stare that the pukka sahib directs at a servant who has inconvenienced him. Greenaway, however, has a lot more in common with his loutish protagonist than he thinks. He obviously regards himself as an aesthetic virtuoso, but he's just a cultural omnivore. (He chews with his mouth open—we can identify almost every piece of art that has fed his imagina-

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IN BRIEF—Cont'd

tion.) The only thing in this movie's tidy, hermetic universe that Greenaway is unable to control, or disguise with fancy brushwork, is his loathing of the body. The movie features several gross-out scenes, including a climactic act of cannibalism; the Motion Picture Association of America gave it an X rating. (The distributors released it unrated.) What's offensive about the picture, though, isn't its violence or its visceral shocks but the patrician arrogance, the smug aestheticism, the snobbishness that suffuse every frame. Greenaway is an intellectual bully: he pushes us to the ground and kicks art in our faces. Also with Alan Howard (the Lover) and Richard Bohringer (the Cook). Cinematography by Sacha Vierny.—T.R. (5/7/90) (Angelika Film Center...
 ♣ Worldwide Cinemas. Evenings only.)

DAYS OF THUNDER—This new Tom Cruise vehicle, directed by Tony Scott, is the latest example of the nearly demagogic brand of pop-culture uplift practiced by the producers Don Simpson and Jerry Bruckheimer. (They were also responsible for "Flashdance" and "Top Gun.") It's about winning, and nothing else. The setting this time is the stock-car-racing circuit. The screenwriter, Robert Towne, seems to be trying to underplay the rah-rah elements of the material—to give competition some point other than pure ego gratification. And he supplies some nice dialogue: easy, natural-sounding macho banter among the drivers and their crews. But the movie has been stripped for speed: by the big race (the Daytona 500), all the ambiguities in the script have been removed, and there's nothing to interfere with Cruise's, and the producers', streak to the finish line. Like the previous Simpson-Bruckheimer picture, it's designed—engineered, really—to give audiences an overdose of the thrill of victory; it wants us to jump out of our seats, pumping our fists in the air and roaring for the hero to pulverize his opponents. The racing sequences are very ordinary. Also with Robert Duvall, who gives a lively performance as the hero's mentor, and Michael Rooker, Nicole Kidman, Randy Quaid, and Cary Elwes.—T.R. (7/16/90) (Loews 19th Street East 6, Loews 34th Street Showplace, Manhattan Twin, U. A. East, and Ziegfeld...
 ♣ Movieland 8th Street Triplex, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex; through July 26.)

DICK TRACY—This isn't the kind of crass crowd-pleaser we've become accustomed to; its dullness is of the old-fashioned variety. Everything but the film's bold, striking comic-strip visual design (created by Richard Sylbert and photographed by Vittorio Storaro) is low-key. Warren Beatty directed and plays the title role. His performance is recessive almost to the point of perversity. In Chester Gould's comic strip, Dick Tracy always seemed like a tough, aggressive, no-nonsense guy; Beatty's Tracy is a ditherer. And his tentativeness as an actor here is matched by the dreamy, distracted quality of his direction. The picture has no drive; its style is less "Dick Tracy" than "Classics Illustrated." It's pleasant, lovingly detailed, and eye-filling. It's everything a movie can be except interesting. Some of the actors are fun to watch: Madonna, as Breathless Mahoney, vamps entertainingly; Glenna Headly does an expert spunky-gal turn as Tess Trueheart, the hero's long-suffering girlfriend; and Al Pacino, as a sleazy mobster named Big Boy Caprice, creates a memorable comic grotesque. Also with William Forsythe (Flatfoot), Dustin Hoffman (Mumbles), Mandy Patinkin (88 Keys), R. G. Armstrong (Pruneface), Paul Sorvino (Lips Manlis), Charlie Korsmo, Charles Durning, Estelle Parsons, Dick Van Dyke, and James Caan. The script is credited to Jim Cash and Jack Epps, Jr. (with the writer Bo Goldman listed as "special consultant"). Score by Danny Elfman; original songs by Stephen Sondheim.—T.R. (7/2/90) (Gramercy, Cinema I, Quad Cinema, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy.)

ENEMIES, A LOVE STORY—Emotionally overwhelming. Adapted from Isaac Bashevis Singer's New York City novel, set in 1949—a post-Holocaust sex farce in which three passionately jealous women are in love with a guilt-ridden, self-effacing man. The director, Paul Mazursky, has gathered a superbly balanced cast and kept the action so smooth

that the viewer is carried along on a tide of mystical slyness. Ron Silver is the Polish-Jewish intellectual who survived the Final Solution by hiding in a hayloft. Margaret Sophie Stein is the Gentile peasant (now his wife) who risked her life to take care of him. Lena Olin is his diabolically willful mistress, a survivor of the camps. Anjelica Huston is the wife (with an erotic aura) he thought was killed by the Nazis. This richly satisfying movie is restrained, yet it has its own deeply crazy turmoil. Mazursky pulls the rug out from under us, and we drop through the farce. With Alan King, Judith Malina, Phil



At MOMA, Betty Grable in "Mother Wore Tights"

Leeds, and Mazursky. The script is by Roger L. Simon and the director.—P.K. (12/25/89) (Thalia SoHo; July 27-28.)

THE FILE ON THELMA JORDON (1950)—Did any other actress—even Joan Crawford—get herself into as much heavy melodramatic trouble as Barbara Stanwyck? This time, she's on trial for murder, and the assistant district attorney (Wendell Corey) falls in love with her and deliberately loses the case. Robert Siodmak directed very efficiently (there's a sequence with the camera following Stanwyck from her jail cell to the courthouse that is a model of film craft), and Ketti Frings' script has some sharp dialogue (Stanwyck has a first-rate last line). But the movie is unexciting, and despite Stanwyck's professionalism we don't much care whether or not Thelma Jordan is a killer, or whether she's purified by love, either. This may be because of the plot contrivances (from a story by Marty Holland) and also because the male actors aren't in Stanwyck's league. Corey demonstrates innate goodness by being blankly wide-eyed, and the bad guy in Thelma's life—played by Richard Rober—has no sexual threat in his nastiness. With Stanley Ridges, Joan Tetzl, Paul Kelly, and Minor Watson. Cinematography by George Barnes; music by Victor Young.—P.K. (Biograph Cinema; July 31-Aug. 1.)

THE FRESHMAN—With Matthew Broderick and Marlon Brando, directed by Andrew Bergman. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Gemini, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex...
 ♣ Movieland 8th Street Triplex, and Criterion Center; starting July 27.)

GHOST—With Patrick Swayze, Demi Moore, Whoopi Goldberg, and Tony Goldwyn; directed by Jerry Zucker. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Loews 19th Street East 6, Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews Tower East, Art Greenwich Twin, and Loews Paramount.)

GREMLINS 2 THE NEW BATCH—The director, Joe Dante, and his team (which includes the screenwriter Charlie Haas and the effects supervisor Rick Baker) have made a multimillion-dollar, special-effects-crammed picture that has the loose, improvisatory feel of the great Warner Brothers cartoons of the forties and fifties. They're fearless and indefatigable gagsters, and the movie is smarter,

wilder, and more unfettered than the original "Gremlins" (1984). There's an ideal setting for the gremlins' rampaging consumption: they've been let loose in a state-of-the-art Manhattan office building and mall called the Clamp Centre (after Daniel Clamp, the egotistical developer who built it). This towering steel-and-glass wedge is a monument to the runaway acquisitiveness of the eighties, and by the time the little monsters have chomped and guzzled (and sung and danced) their way through its cheerless offices and boutiques, Dante and his collaborators have trashed—or at least lobbed spitballs at—quite a few of the most unattractive aspects of life in these United States. In its adolescent way, the movie's almost subversive: a high-spirited combination of Looney Tunes principles and Dante's own manic pop-culture-in-a-blender sensibility. Zach Galligan, Phoebe Cates, Dick Miller, and Jackie Joseph return from the first film. They're joined by John Glover, who plays Clamp as a doltish child; Haviland Morris, who is hilarious as an ambitious, fast-talking businesswoman named Marla; and the horror-movie veteran Christopher Lee, who plays Dr. Catheter, the director of a genetic-engineering laboratory. The animated pre-credit sequence, featuring Daffy Duck and Bugs Bunny, was written and directed by Chuck Jones, who made some of the greatest Warner cartoons.—T.R. (7/2/90) (59th Street East Cinema, Chelsea Cinemas, and Criterion Center.)

LONGTIME COMPANION—The screenwriter, Craig Lucas, and the director, Norman René, track the effects of AIDS on the lives of eight people: seven gay men and a straight woman who is a lifelong friend of one of the men. The filmmakers focus on one day in each year of the epidemic, from 1981 through 1989, and the mournful progress of the decade is expressed by the gaps between the annual episodes: the cast of characters keeps getting smaller, and at the end only the woman and three of the men are left. The movie is sometimes very effective, but it's often blander and more simplistic than it should be. It seems determined to convey a wholesome, "normal" image of gay life to straight America—so all its characters are pleasant and good-looking, and they're all white, too. The only really interesting characters are a middle-aged couple, David (Bruce Davison) and Sean (Mark Lamos). The natural protagonist of the drama is David, who, when Sean gets sick, cares for him with extraordinary patience and tenderness. Davison's performance (in probably the best role he has ever had) is wonderfully dry and precise. There's a strange reserve in his demeanor even when he's being goofy, so the strength he shows at the bedside of his dying lover is both heart-breaking and absolutely convincing. It's a well-written role, and Davison does a beautiful piece of acting. After he, too, disappears—between episodes—the movie seems to have lost the best part of itself. Also with Campbell Scott, Stephen Caffrey, Patrick Cassidy, Mary-Louise Parker, John Dossett, and Dermot Mulroney.—T.R. (5/21/90) (Chelsea Cinemas, and Carnegie Hall Cinema.)

MAY FOOLS—Louis Malle's new film takes place in May, 1968, when, for a few chaotic weeks, French society seemed on the verge of remaking itself: students were rioting, workers were striking, and the country came to a standstill. The characters in this picture are far removed from the stirring street theatre of May '68, but they're affected by it nonetheless. The setting is a shabby estate presided over by Milou (Michel Piccoli), a genial man in his sixties who lives the life of a lazy country sensualist: he keeps bees, brows in the sun, and gropes the housekeeper. On the sunny day when the story begins, his mother dies, and he summons the rest of the family for the funeral and the reading of the will. There's a sense that things are about to change, both on the large scale of French society and on the infinitely smaller one of Milou's life. Malle and his co-writer, Jean-Claude Carrière, use the upheaval of May '68, very deftly: it intrudes on their comedy like distant thunder on a sunny day, but the threatened downpour of Meaning never develops—we get a cooling shower of light ironies instead. The movie's central joke is that its hero—this aging, apolitical landed gentleman—is in some sense an embodiment of the spirit of the time: not an enemy of the revolution but an unlikely comrade. Piccoli gives one of the best performances of his long career: he's vigorous and radiantly good-

humored. Although its charm sometimes feels a bit too easy, the film is enjoyable throughout. It just bounces along to the rhythm of its remarkable score, composed and played by the eighty-two-year-old jazz violinist Stéphane Grappelli; the movie, like the music, has a delicate swing to it. Also with Miou-Miou, Michel Duchausoy, Dominique Blanc, Harriet Walter, Renaud Danner, Rozenn Le Tallec, and Paulette Dubost. Cinematography by Renato Berta. In French.—T.R. (7/16/90) (Lincoln Plaza.)

NEXT STOP, GREENWICH VILLAGE (1976)—Paul Mazursky's wonderful autobiographical lyric satire about a young comedian's life in the Village in the early fifties. With a tip-top cast headed by Lenny Baker, Ellen Greene, Christopher Walken, and Antonio Fargas, and with Shelley Winters giving perhaps her best performance—as the comedian's mother, whose unused brains and talent have turned her into a morose, irrepressible, howling freak. Also with Jeff Goldblum, Dori Brenner, Lois Smith, Mike Kellin, Michael Egan, John Ford Noonan, Lou Jacobi, Rochelle Oliver, and John C. Becher.—P.K. (Thalia SoHo; July 27-28.)

PRETTY WOMAN—The lovers in this romantic comedy, directed by Garry Marshall, are a long-legged, golden-hearted Hollywood Boulevard hooker (Julia Roberts) and a cold, suave corporate raider (Richard Gere). He buys her tasteful (expensive) clothes and shows her how to act "classy"; she opens—in order—his wallet, his fly, and his heart. The only real distinction of this long and rather uneventful diversion is the radical contrast between the stars' performing styles. Roberts is all ebullience and scattershot charm. The kind word for Gere's style is minimal. He's opaque, stubbornly remote; he seems to have faxed his performance in. At its worst, the movie is just unimaginative; at its best, it's pleasant and competent. It's business-as-usual entertainment. The screenplay is by J. F. Lawton.—T.R. (Sutton, 23rd St. West Triplex, and Worldwide Cinemas. . . . Quad Cinema, and Metro Cinema. Evenings only.)

QUICK CHANGE—With Bill Murray, Geena Davis, Randy Quaid, and Jason Robards; directed by Howard Franklin and Murray. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Angelika Film Center, Cinema II, 86th Street East Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and West Side Cinema.)

THE SEVENTH SEAL (1956)—Ingmar Bergman's medieval morality play about man in search of the meaning of life is set in fourteenth-century Sweden. But it's a magically powerful film—the story seems to be playing itself out in a medieval present. A knight (Max von Sydow), tormented and doubting, returns from ten wasted years in the Crusades, and Death (Bengt Ekerot) comes to claim him. Hoping to gain some revelation or obtain some knowledge before he dies, the knight challenges Death to a game of chess. As they play, the knight observes scenes of cruelty, rot, and suffering that suggest the tortures and iniquity Ivan Karamazov described to Alyosha. In the end, the knight tricks Death in order to save a family of strolling players—a visionary, innocent, natural man, Joseph (Nils Poppe), his wife (Bibi Andersson), and their infant son. The knight, a sane modern man, asking to believe despite all the evidence of his senses, is childlike compared with his carnal atheist squire (Gunnar Björnstrand). The images and the omens are medieval, but the modern erotic and psychological insights add tension, and in some cases, as in the burning of the child witch (Maud Hansson), excruciation. The actors' faces, the aura of magic, the ambiguities, and the riddle at the heart of the film all contribute to its stature. In Swedish.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Aug. 1.)

SUNSET BOULEVARD (1950)—A young scriptwriter (William Holden), speeding away from the finance-company men who have come to repossess his car (it is Los Angeles, where a man can get along without his honor, but not without his car), turns into a driveway on Sunset Boulevard and finds himself at the decaying mansion of the once great silent star Norma Desmond (Gloria Swanson). Attended by her butler (Erich von Stroheim), who was once her husband and her director, she lives among the mementos of her past, and plots her comeback in her own adaptation of "Salome." The rapacious old vamp persuades the young man to stay and work with her on the script; he becomes her kept man, her lover, her victim. The details are baroque:

the rats in the empty swimming pool, the wind moaning in the organ pipes, the midnight burial of a pet chimpanzee. Glint-eyed Swanson clutches at her comeback role almost as if it were Salome, yet the acting honors belong to Holden. When he makes love to the crazy, demanding old woman, his face shows a mixture of pity and guilt and nausea. This brittle satiric tribute to Hollywood's leopard-skin past—it's narrated by a corpse—is almost too clever, yet it's at its best in this cleverness, and is slightly banal in the sequences dealing with a normal girl (Nancy Olson) and modern Hollywood. Billy Wilder directed; Charles Brackett produced; the script is by Brackett, Wilder, and D. M. Marshman, Jr. With Buster Keaton, H. B. Warner, Anna Q. Nilsson, Hedda Hopper, Cecil B. De Mille, Jack Webb, Fred Clark, and Lloyd Gough.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; July 27-28.)

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES—A tacky, light-hearted parody of crime-wave movies—camp for kiddies. As babies, the four turtles were let loose in radioactive muck; they mutated into hip, English-speaking people-size turtles who live in the dark sewers of New York City and send out for pizza. Their mentor, the wise old rat Splinter, has trained them in the martial arts, and they fight the criminal legions led by the Japanese, Darth Vader-like Shredder. Their human friends are the TV newswoman April O'Neil (Judith Hoag) and the daredevil Casey Jones (Elias Koteas). Everything in the movie has a playful, pop familiarity, and the jokey allusions to other movies are easy for young kids to grasp. The four turtles (stuntmen in getups devised by Jim Henson's Creature Shop) are not as individualized as one might hope, but Splinter has an Alice-in-Wonderland creepiness. The director, Steve Barron, is casual with Hoag and Koteas, who blend in gracefully; he can't do much for the preachy subplot involving a father and son who misunderstand each other. (The flashbacks are the most fun.) The story is based on the comic-book characters devised in 1983 by Peter Laird and Kevin Eastman.—P.K. (Worldwide Cinemas. Matinees only.)

TIE ME UP! TIE ME DOWN!—Pedro Almodóvar's new movie gets off to a fast start, like a windup toy, but it runs out of momentum early, and Almodóvar can't figure out how to start it up again. The story, about a released mental patient (Antonio Banderas) who follows a sexy actress (Victoria Abril) and then takes her prisoner, seems to tie the director's wild imagination down, and his efforts to keep his (and the audience's) blood circulating betray some desperation. Neither the kidnapper's romantic obsession nor his captive's eventual love for him is especially convincing. And we don't fully enjoy the perverse humor of the situation, either: we've seen the victim subdued by a hard slap, and that image is too strong to forget. The limpness of "Tie Me Up!" suggests that Almodóvar is either a confused director or a tired one—probably a bit of both. It's as if he had made the movie solely to satisfy the public's demand for a new Almodóvar film. Also with Francisco Rabal, Loles Leon, and Lola Cardona. Screenplay by Almodóvar. In Spanish.—T.R. (5/7/90) (Quad Cinema, and Lincoln Plaza.)

TOTAL RECALL—This fifty-million-dollar science-fiction thriller is full of relentless action and spectacular effects, and it's no fun at all. It's as heavy-spirited as its star, Arnold Schwarzenegger: imposing and implacable, like the killer robot Arnold played (or embodied) in "The Terminator." The script, by Ronald Shusett, Dan O'Bannon, and Gary Goldman, is based on a story by Philip K. Dick; the plot keeps twisting and turning, but we stop following it before the picture is half over. It's just a frame for meaty action sequences—a skeleton nestled deep inside ballooning muscles. The director, Paul Verhoeven ("RoboCop"), composes striking images, but they're oppressive and completely impersonal: every weird angle, every close-up of a face contorted with pain, every splash of bright-red blood is an effect borrowed from horror comics. The picture itself is a terminator: when it's over, you feel as if the life had been pounded out of you, and you never want to go to the movies again. Also with Sharon Stone, Ronny Cox, and Rachel Ticotin.—T.R. (6/18/90) (Loews 19th Street East 6, Gemini, Regency, and Criterion Center. . . . MovieLand 8th Street Triplex; through July 26.)

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THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

HALF a century ago, the editors of the *Reader's Digest*, standing on their hill in Westchester and peering confidently into the future, saw the garbage disposal making its way over the horizon, rumbling and crunching as it came. "An electrical garbage man which works right in the kitchen" is how they described it, in awestruck words picked up from the *Christian Science Monitor* and inserted under the running *Digest* head "THIS AGE OF INGENUITY." "Waste, placed inside, is shredded by knives and reduced to a fine pulp which is flushed away by water into the sewage stream," they explained. With the same confidence, the people at the *Reader's Digest* told readers to make way for the luminous motorcar ("coated with phosphorescent paint and can be seen at night for half a mile"), the silent piano and violin ("audible only to the instructor and his pupil, through earphones"), the glass-wool mattress, the salt highway, and the electric mousetrap. A half century ago, the *Digest* saw plastic playing cards coming, but then it saw the ultraviolet infant tattoo coming, too: "Many hospital-born babies will in future have their names 'sunburned' on their backs at birth with the rays of a quartz lamp."

All this information has reached us by way of a fifty-year-old copy of the "Readers Digest Reader"—a compilation of articles and features selected in 1940, when the *Digest* had been published for eighteen years—that fell into our hands a few weeks ago. We have been reading it com-

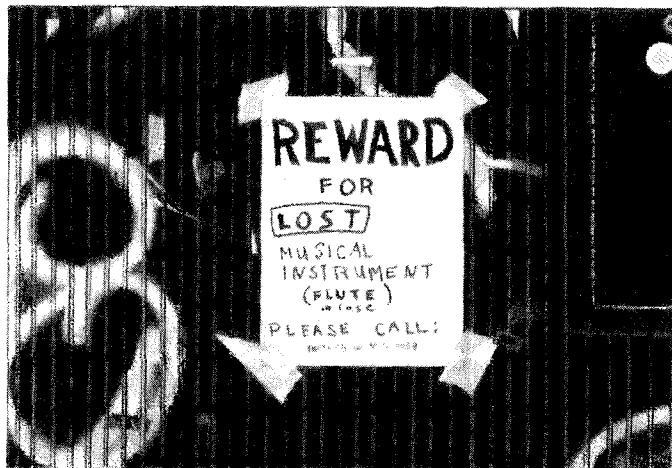
pulsively ever since. What's fascinating is not so much the strangeness of the experiences related as the unfamiliarity of the molds into which the experiences were poured—the set pieces and genres that only fifty years ago seemed the natural forms of popular journalism.

Some of the genres you can find in the "Digest Reader" are, of course, evergreen. There is the piece that writes itself from the title down: "The World's Most Efficient Pump," "The Ingenious Eskimo," "Seeing Ourselves in Our Dogs," "Take Your Profits from Defeat," and "Try Everything Once." There is the thumbsucker written for money by a Big Name. H. G. Wells weighs in, for instance, with a classic, written specially for the *Digest*, that is called "The Three Greatest Men In History." (Jesus, Buddha, Aristotle.) "Some thirteen years ago I was asked to name the Six Greatest Men in the World," Wells begins sapiently. "I have been confronted with my former answer and asked if I still adhere to it. Not altogether." He keeps the thing spinning for fifteen hundred words or so, mustering up a few good rhetorical ques-

tions ("What of those great astronomers who broke the crystal globe in which man's imagination had been confined and let it out into limitless space?"), and then cuts the A-team in half ("I think I will leave it at three") and collects his check. Other examples include Harold Nicolson on shyness (he suffers from it), Princess Alexandra Kropotkin on praise (she wants it), and Walter Lippmann on the American destiny (it waits).

But there are no ruminative, poetical baseball pieces. (The only piece about the game that does appear is by John J. McGraw; it's called "The Tough Days of Baseball" and recounts dirty tricks and vicious spikings.) There are no pieces about impending ecological catastrophes. Strangest of all, in a hundred and forty articles reprinted from "nearly every periodical published in the United States," and including subjects like papermaking, the witch panic in Salem, the art of opening a conversation, and the miracles of Lourdes, there is not a single piece about a celebrity.

Especially interesting are the missing links, the fossils: genre pieces that are almost but disconcertingly not quite like the genres into which they later evolved. Sex, for instance—or "the sex act," as it is almost always called—was far from being a taboo subject, and was present at least as often in the *Digest* fifty years ago as it is now; it just demanded a slightly different tone. Who would bet, for instance, that the word "orgasm" could have appeared in the *Digest* before the Second World War? There it is, though, in a how-to



piece by Alexis Carrel, M.D., called "Married Love." "Perfunctory coitus is a confession of lack of intelligence and character," Dr. Carrel remarks crisply, and then notes, on behalf of women readers, "Generally, the masculine orgasm occurs before her senses are totally roused. . . . Her husband must learn self-control and enlightened technique." In "The Case for Chastity," written in 1937 for the *Digest*, Margaret Culkin Banning deals frankly and directly with the premarital sex act, and in the end she comes out against it, partly for aesthetic reasons (she gets off a riff of wasteland imagery in the cadences of Cyril Connolly or the young Eliot: "Think of the wayside cabins, the cheap hotels, the back seats of cars") but mostly for a starker reason: if you perform the sex act outside marriage, she ponders, can you ever be happily married? Her article seemed to Donald Culross Peattie, another *Digest* contributor, alarmingly unspiritual. In "A Way to Chastity," an "answer" piece, Peattie argues that the hardboiled Mrs. Banning missed the central issue. "Yes, love. This is the thing that is stronger than fear, stronger than shame. This is the thing we ought to talk about. Anybody who is here beginning to be embarrassed for me, may go off and blush in the corner," he declares bravely.

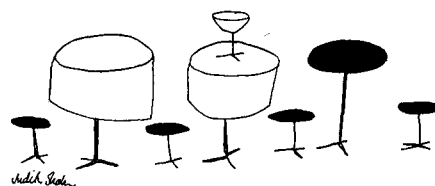
There are also two long, detailed, and rather candid articles about the prevention and treatment of syphilis, and one fine, passionate reporting piece (condensed from the *Atlantic Monthly*) about a program of state-sponsored birth control in North Carolina. ("Already the state has files of letters which comprise a social Magna Charta. . . . Chief beneficiaries of state birth control are the mountaineers, the textile and tobacco workers in the industrial section, and Negro tenant farmers.") The *Digest* would probably take more flack for printing that kind of thing now than it did half a century ago.

If the sex piece was caught somewhere between the old, moralizing exhortation and today's clinical, operating-manual style, some postwar genres were totally unknown. The ex-Communist confession, for instance, which played such a starring role in the *Digest* after the war, didn't exist. In its place you can find pieces like "A Professor Quits the Communist Party"—a dry

account of life in the Party which, cheerfully ceding good intentions to its adherents, emphasizes the helplessness, the self-importance, and the impotent tedium of American Communism. ("The meetings droned on endlessly with rules, regulations and plans interspersed with laudatory testimonials.") Reading this and similar pieces makes you realize that their replacement, the Whittaker Chambers-style confession, perversely managed, against all odds, to make the Party seem glamorous and sinister—*interesting*.

Ominous events cast little shadow before them. With the world already at war, and America about to get involved, there is just one piece that mentions Nazism, and it is (intentionally or not) counterbalanced by a piece about atrocity charges in the Civil War, which makes the point that these things usually get exaggerated in the telling. No wonder so few people could believe the horrible truths that were to come.

What is most striking, though, in the "Digest Reader" of 1940 is the now dead styles and molds that no one then thought of even as conventional, they seemed so much a fact of life. Middle names, for instance: writers wore them then the way they wore hats. Fifty years ago, hardly anyone could sit down to bat out a free-lance piece on insects, or on the first President's real-estate deals, without the armor of three well-spaced, ringing names. William Atherton Du Puy ("The May Flies' Dance of Death"), Albert Bushnell Hart ("George Washington—Business Man"), Edward Larocque Tinker, Henry Morton Robinson, William Moulton Marston, Kenneth Irving Brown, Katharine Fullerton Gerould, Earl Chapin May, Janet Ranken Aiken, Harry Emerson Fosdick—there is an expansive, nineteenth-century, Chester Alan Arthur confidence about them all, a girth and embonpoint, a promise of prose at once twinkling and amused, manly and burly. How much of the old prosiness, the Macaulay and Carlyle roundness of phrase still lingered in popular writing then!



Our favorite piece in the "Digest Reader" is by Henry Morton Robinson, who found fame a decade later as the author of "The Cardinal." It is called "You Won't Be Snubbed," and it's a *Digest* original. It is about a man named David Jessup, who liked to talk to strangers. Says Henry Morton Robinson, after Jessup has approached him, "Your happy knack of speaking to strangers—how do you manage it? . . . All my life I've wanted to mingle with strangers who could widen my interests and quicken my sense of being alive, yet I've always hung back, afraid of a rebuff. How does one overcome this fear of being snubbed?" Jessup's icebreakers turn out to be mostly like this one: "I saw you watching that bronzed chap mending his snowshoes. He's the Rhodes Scholar from New York. He stroked the Cornell crew last year and was president of the debating club besides. Don't you think he's a splendid type to represent American youth at Oxford?" We intend to try that the next time we feel uncomfortable with a stranger. Henry Morton Robinson concludes, after he has learned the Jessup method of making friends, that "training and tradition may have cast us in dissimilar molds, but the basic stuff of our humanity is pathetically the same." Only a writer worth remembering would have seen the force of that "pathetically."

Afterlife

OUR friend who has been visiting Russia writes:

The most fun I had last month was in a cemetery. Moscow's most important cemetery, Novodevichy (which means New Virgin, and also refers to an adjoining convent, built in 1524), is a cheerily animated place, bustling with the spirits of the hundreds of illustrious dead who are in permanent residence. A friend took me there. We bought flowers at the gate to lay on Gogol's tomb, and thus had our first small pleasure: being admitted not as ticket-paying tourists but as legitimate mourners.

Going through the gate was like plunging into a three-ring circus. On Moscow's blank streets the eye longs for distractions, but in the cemetery we hardly knew which way to turn: there

was a two-foot-high statue of a lovely woman in a harem dress and a flapper haircut, staring expectantly at her audience; a few graves down, a stone mink curled itself playfully over the top of a tombstone; nearby, a pilot's tomb was topped with an enormous sculpture of Icarus plunging to his death. Several babushkas had been buried under gravestones decorated with their photographs: unsmiling women with suncreased eyes, who were the proudly obese survivors of war and famine, and who all had kerchiefs knotted under their determined jowls. Aleksandra Kollontay, the firebrand who was one of Lenin's closest associ-

ates, was there, too, portrayed life-size in stone, wearing a plain, long shift, her hair cut in an equally severe pageboy.

I had the impression of joyful noise. There was the constant rustling of leaves in the tree canopy above us, and the cawing of crows and jays, but mostly I couldn't shake off the illusion that loud, animated chatter was coming from the irrepressible dead: Kollontay still lecturing sternly on the virtues of free love; Chaliapin (reclining gracefully in a steamer chair, fresh from a song recital, perhaps, in Tolstoy's sitting room) tossing off gossip and malicious wit; Gogol—whom we finally located, across a path from Chekhov—with his magnificently heavy-lidded eyes gazing disdainfully down at the rest of the crowd, saying, "I have seen it all, and I am taken in by none of you." A few sad voices came through as well—notably that of the delicately beautiful Nadezhda Alliluyeva, Stalin's second wife, who committed suicide when she was thirty-one—but most of the graveyard conversation was lighthearted and lively. Eventually, I realized that for the first time in several long Moscow days I was feeling happy, and that this happiness reflected the fact that the rules against



"I'm in the mood for some nouvelle cuisine, just for old times' sake."

expression of the individual spirit—which have devoured Soviet art and dried up social discourse—have, for unknown reasons, been waived in Novodevichy. The resulting explosion of extravagant and eccentric public statuary was providing my most intense experience of Russia.

A day or two later, I went back to Novodevichy with another friend, a journalist, and together we strolled past the statue of Khrushchev's Politburo ally Anastas Mikoyan (which my friend said almost but not quite captured the debonair spirit of that simpatico old Armenian) and gazed at the monuments of a few Heroes of Socialist Labor—especially one of a Hero of Radio Broadcasting, portrayed speaking before an old-fashioned studio mike, with an antenna protruding from one corner of the tombstone, presumably to capture transmissions from the Great Beyond. Then we headed for Khrushchev's tomb.

Flowers act as a kind of afterlife popularity poll in Novodevichy. The largest number of offerings is to be found around the breathtaking statue of a young girl mortally wounded, her cropped hair swept back to show where an ear was cut off during torture, and one breast exposed to Nazi bullets. Rus-

sian excursion groups stand in front of this Hero of the Soviet Union in devout silence, then lay red flowers all around or tie red ribbons to the surrounding branches. Khrushchev doesn't get anywhere near this kind of treatment, but on my two visits he was placing a distant second—McGovern to Nixon, if you will, but second all the same—whereas the Soviet Establishment was not even in the running. One of the large ladies who act as cemetery tour guides was delivering a cursory account of Khrushchev's failed career, and before laying our own bunch of red carnations on the white marble we waited briefly for her group to move on and for a family to finish photographing each other in front of the grave, so that we could quietly contemplate for a few minutes the remarkable likeness of the cunning, roly-poly little man who in the end turned out to be not cunning enough.

On my last morning in Moscow, my journalist friend stood in line with me to visit the Lenin Mausoleum. He hadn't been in it since the days when it housed Joseph Stalin's embalmed remains as well, and on his last previous visit he had accompanied Josip Broz Tito, who, he told me, gave Lenin only his briefest attention before focussing

a look of intense curiosity and loathing on Stalin.

The line moved swiftly past a row of guards, one of whom instructed the youths ahead of us to stop smiling, then told me to put away my permission to stand in line. I stuffed it into my pocket, and the next guard barked at me to take my hands out of my pockets. Hands dangling, we filed down the stairs of the red granite mausoleum into the dimly lit precinct where Lenin's body lies under glass, appearing to be on the cutting edge of decay. Silent and unsmiling, we filed upstairs again, and then we walked along the Kremlin wall, where the Soviet Union's other most honored dead are entombed. Brezhnev was there, and Andropov, and Chernenko, but, I suddenly remembered, Khrushchev wasn't; despite all the *glasnost* and *perestroika*, he remained in exile at Novodevichy. "Look who's here!" my friend exclaimed. There in the row of busts topping slim pediments was a familiar mustachioed face. It was Joseph Stalin—banished from the Soviet Union's holy of holies but not, it turned out, from its afterlife's inner circle.

Fever

THE other day, while Elizabeth Hayt-Atkins, a contemporary-art critic, was in the middle of analyzing

Eva Hesse's post-minimalist latex-coated rope sculpture, she got the feeling that the fall collections might already be on the racks at Loehmann's. Since the temperature outside was above eighty, she figured that serious Loehmann's shoppers would be similarly inspired to think winterwear, and so would be out there picking the racks clean. In a moment like this, Elizabeth deploys two critical theories: one, designers like Ungaro and Christian Lacroix are the direct legacy of patternists like Matisse and Bonnard, so a trip to Loehmann's is really an investigation of a slice of art history; and, two, anything she gets at Loehmann's she can wear when she teaches, and thus she can provide her students with a living example of composition and design. Accordingly, she let go of Eva Hesse and headed out to the Loehmann's in New Hyde Park. We went along for the ride.

When she's in this frame of mind, Elizabeth drives her brown '81 Camaro from her apartment, on the Upper East Side, to the Loehmann's in New Hyde Park, the Loehmann's in the Bronx, or the Loehmann's in Paramus, New Jersey. Her experience is that New Hyde Park is where she has the best luck, which in her case means finding something size two or four, narrow, Italian, and tomato red or hunter green, to go

with a fair complexion and chestnut hair. "It's scientific," she told us as she drove across the Triborough Bridge. "Here's my hypothesis: New Hyde Park is close to Manhasset and Great Neck, so Loehmann's ships most of its chic clothes there. But what Loehmann's doesn't realize is that the women in Great Neck wear nothing but tennis clothes and have no interest in designer items. In the Bronx, there's always a preponderance of large-size clothing, which suggests to me that too many thin people shop there aggressively and strip it clean. As for Paramus, I like it except that there's always an excessive number of jumpsuits and I don't really understand New Jersey. Therefore, New Hyde Park is my favorite target. I try to hit hard when the new collections come out. February, March, I do very heavy hitting. July, August, more heavy hitting. I go into full-wool mode when it's very hot."

On the Long Island Expressway, Elizabeth said, "I was bred to love beautiful clothes. But face it—I'm an art critic. This creates a serious economic crisis. I first began shopping at Loehmann's just to solve that problem, but now it's more than an economic undertaking. It has become a mission. I get a fever. It's a *passion*. I'm *rabid*. Finding a little Moschino number for a couple of dollars at Loehmann's is like finding a Gainsborough at somebody's yard sale. When I'm really on, I feel like one of those women who can lift cars off babies—I suddenly have the strength to carry a huge pile of clothes."

At Exit 34, she said, "Do you feel the earth starting to move? We're really close. I usually get stirred up right about now, because I feel like I'm about to rob a bank." Pulling into the parking lot, she added, "Here we are—the sacred realm. And we may be about to find the one apparel item that changes our lives."

Elizabeth walked into Loehmann's and scanned the store,



"Number 6522719? Our executive assistant warden says he's sorry but he's been unavoidably detained at the squash court. However, if you will leave your criminal record he'll be happy to reschedule for next week."

which is a beige gymnasiumlike space full of unadorned metal jobber racks of clothing with the designer labels snipped out. A heavyset woman in a green sarong was walking in front of us, accompanied by a blond-haired woman, who was saying, "I should want a parka, but somehow I don't."

Elizabeth motioned toward them and whispered, "Bad thinking. I try to formulate my look before I buy. I don't want impulse. I'm going at the bone of my closet."

Approaching the nearest rack, Elizabeth remarked that many Loehmann's shoppers head straight for the back room, which is where the dressiest clothes are stashed. "Very novice," she said. "My friend Helene taught me the serious shopper's system. You go through every single rack out front, no matter how disgusting it looks. Context is everything. I often marvel about that. Consider that a piece of Donald Judd sculpture in the Whitney looks expensive and layered with dense ontological meaning, whereas if you saw it on a construction site it would fit right in. Oh, look at *this!*" She yanked a psychedelic-print blouse off the rack. "It's Italian, I can just tell. It's Byblos—see the tag?" She put the blouse back on the rack. A moment later, a wispy woman in Army fatigues took it and headed for the dressing room. "Isn't taste amazing?" Elizabeth said, watching her walk away. "That shirt might be her destiny, but it certainly isn't mine. Remember, we're looking for anything designed by someone whose name ends with a vowel."

By the time Elizabeth reached the last rack, she had draped over her arm a navy-blue Isaac Mizrahi shift, a Romeo Gigli shirt missing two out of three buttons, a banana-yellow Rebecca Moses topper, and a sleeveless sweater with a white collar, origin unknown. "It's got a witty quality," she said, examining the sweater. "I'm guessing it's Anne Klein. I think I'll give it the benefit of the doubt." As she was walking toward the dressing room, something turquoise and ribbed caught her eye. "My God!" she said, digging it out. "This ill-fitting, miserable-looking dress has been in every single Loehmann's this month. Kind of breaks your heart, doesn't it? Let's try these on and then go to the Bronx—there was a Helmut Lang dress there last month that I need to reconsider."



"You've got to admire the way George Bush congratulated Kohl and Gorbachev for working things out."

She cleared her throat. "See what all this excitement is doing to me? I've got shopping mouth." In the end, she kept only the Mizrahi shift and the Gigli shirt.

At the Loehmann's in the Bronx, Elizabeth scanned the parking lot and said, "I don't like seeing all these BMWs. That spells competition, which can get ugly. What I love about this Loehmann's is that it's the only one that has a permanent section marked 'Career Dressing.' Very telling. Now that I think of it, I'm sorry I resisted the banana topper back in New Hyde Park. But I'm just starting to work on my fall closet, and I don't think I can throw in a banana topper out of the blue. I want to make this quick and then head for Paramus. The Bronx has never been that good to me, although I found my Thierry Mugler sample suit here last year."

Within thirty seconds, she had located a sheer brown Romeo Gigli sarong she first saw a few weeks earlier, seized on a stretchy orange Anne Klein

bodysuit to wear with it, observed that contemporary art has demystified and devalued the idealization of the self, and checked in with the dressing-room attendant, who was pushing a box of clothes through an unmarked door. In the dressing room, a woman half in and half out of a champagne-colored sequinned evening gown eyed Elizabeth in the sarong and said, "You should get that, dear. It's simply gorgeous."

"Too much of a production," Elizabeth said to her. "I want it, and yet it says too many things all at once. It's too didactic. It's too talkative. I'm not sure I'm ready for didactic, talkative clothes. And what would you do for shoes with this? Orange? Am I ready for orange shoes? I think not. And the bodysuit looks kind of not so hot with the sarong." She took the outfit off and dropped it for a moment on the floor.

"Hey, not so quick," the dressing-room attendant said, pointing. "On the hanger, you know?"

HUNGRY HUNGRY HIPPOS

IN my first year out of college, I spent so much time staring into my old black-and-white television set that I began to incorporate the tendency of the picture to roll when the tubes overheated. Drifting off to sleep, I often had vertical-hold problems: the hypnagogic images would travel upward, slowly, framed by dark bands above and below. I remember waking up angry during those days, then starting to laugh, quilted under three blankets and the comforter of a zipped-open sleeping bag in my half of a winterized bungalow, its forced-air vents cut into the ceiling where the warm air stayed and stayed.

It was the seventies, and it was gloomy, of course. For those of us who had graduated from Sugarloaf College the year after it had lost its accreditation, things were so bleak that we boasted in our letters to one another how badly we were doing. I was living in my first non-student apartment, in the middle of what had once been a Jewish summer resort, a cluster of reconditioned cabins amid rows of abandoned ones trailing off into the woods. When my summer landscaping job had ended and I applied for unemployment insurance, I was amazed by how little pressure was put on me to find a job; nobody said a word when I listed my desired occupation as "shepherd."

But even in those days things were happening, although nobody who watched a lot of discussion shows could have believed it. Properties were passing from owner to owner with a firm handshake; new buildings were going up in which prosperous things would someday happen. In the interim

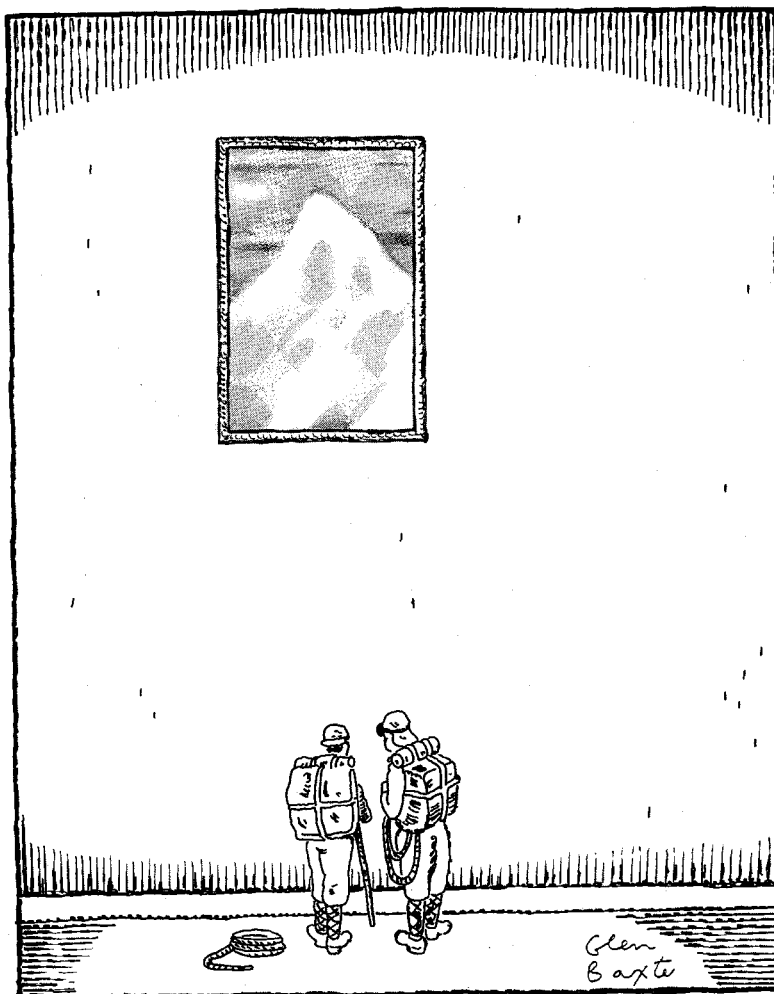
between the closing down of some place and its resurrection into the mainstream of wealth, there may develop for a few years a motley slum life—clunky old oversized cars roaring out of driveways, black-and-white televisions casting a flat light among armchairs with white stuffing bulging out through the holes that dogs have chewed. There grew, into the blank space of this tract waiting to be rezoned and bulldozed away for offices, a brambly tenement life, with domestic disputes, people whose telephones had been disconnected asking me to call the police on each other, cars whose jump-started batteries would sometimes explode with the force of a cherry bomb.

There was a nervous slum comfort, all afternoon, with the snow blowing outside the curtainless windows and the

furnace going on and off, as I sat for hours in front of "Magilla Gorilla," and "Bewitched," and "Hollywood Squares." I could put off for another day collecting whatever new insufficient-funds notice waited in a small envelope braced diagonally in the post-office box that I had rented because the snowplows kept knocking the regular boxes down. I would navigate through the day's *TV Guide* listings, staying away from anything too realistic or too contemporary, ignoring the slow-moving soaps with their hair-sprayed construction workers out of a job, avoiding the prime-time sitcoms with the precocious child star chirping out shrill jokes about the gas shortage. Every time somebody won the grand prize on "The \$20,000 Pyramid" I would get up out of my seat and jump up and down a few times in front of the set, the way the winning contestants did.

The floor would creak beneath my feet, and the motion of my weight would jog the picture tube into its own celebratory series of flips.

I noticed that in commercials for children's games, even though we had been taught at Sugarloaf that kids did not really want to be competitive, it was still essential that the winner say, "I win!" The advertisers must have done some elaborate psychological testing, and it must have worked, because Hungry Hungry Hippos has stayed on the market for over ten years, the object of the game being to press your handle down again and again as fast as you can, with no rhythm, no timing, just slam-slam-slam as your hippo surges out to grab marble from the game surface encircled by other players aged four to twelve, one of whom will soon shout, "I win!"



IT WAS TO BE QUITE A CHALLENGE.
WE HAD NEVER ATTEMPTED A
TWO-MAN ASCENT OF A FRAMED
WATERCOLOR SKETCH BEFORE.

My favorite commercial was for the light-bulb-powered Pizza Hut Baking Oven, in which you could make a wafer-size pie from the accompanying crust and topping mixes. The tape for that commercial had a skip in it, which they never fixed, half a beat somehow spliced out of the song's rhythm. To a bouncy tarantella, with accordions, the children's voices sang, "Pizza Hut, Pizza Hut / Just wait until you try / The pizza that you make yourself . . ." and here half a second had been cut away from the pause between lines, so that they ran together as "The pizza that you make yourSELF a tasty pizza pie!" That was the moment I loved most: sitting in front of the set and singing along precisely with the gap in the tape, laughing at how broken everything was—the couch half-collapsed, the windowpanes rattling in the percussion of somebody's bad muffler outside, the dishes in the Rubbermaid drainer rattling whenever I walked across the carpeted plywood floor.

THERE is a peculiar hazy blue that flickers from a black-and-white set on a winter afternoon when you are walking outside and you look through a window into the darkness of somebody else's living room. There is a leisurely, tidal rhythm to which defective screens used to roll, which perhaps a new generation of transistors no longer permits.

The sky in those days—blank as the periods of dead air between television shows, and hanging over my head like a bad credit rating—seemed so solid, so permanent, that it was hard to imagine my bungalow neighborhood as it had existed in the fifties and sixties, as a summer place for people who couldn't afford Grossinger's. It would have been lush and green in those days, with bushes trimmed back from the paths where I sometimes walked when I needed to let the tubes of my television cool down. The summer evening



"There's a less crowded and more attractive beach at the newly renovated, moderately priced Hotel del Mar, in nearby . . ."

would have been full of dinner smells: hamburger patties dripping fat onto the hot briquettes in those old standup cookers, barbecue sauce burning, the sweet garlic smell of Hebrew National hot dogs, and the mild petroleum vapor of charcoal-lighter fluid. And there would be the usual neighborhood sounds, softened by the absorbent foliage: the piercing notes of children, parents shouting from house to house through the screened windows, radios and televisions ringing through the forest late into the daylight hours of a summer night still bright at seven-thirty.

It was strange to walk among the abandoned buildings and to think what the lives inside them must have been like, in a resort too humble to have a tennis court or a tumbler, with weekly budgets on yellow paper, serious discussions about the future, cash doled out into a series of labelled envelopes. And it was hard to imagine what those people would have thought about what replaced them: a life that draped itself with a strange, erotic slovenliness over

the swaybacked couches; overflowing ashtrays and past-due MasterCharge statements; dishes piled high in the sink for days; and outside the window always the same white, featureless sky.

I WOULD like to think that certain unrelated places and times can possess one shade of light in common. There is a particular light I remember first noticing during my "Sophomore Trimester Abroad," when my friends and I had taken a side trip from London up to Liverpool. I remember how solidly the cloud cover hung over us as we stared at the Liverpool Anglican Cathedral. Huge and gloomy, it stood on the high ground of a rock outcropping, across from where my "Beatles History Guidebook" had directed us to John Lennon's former apartment.

Even now, I like to imagine John Lennon, in the late fifties, his hair greased back, walking out the door of 3 Gambier Terrace every day in the same overcast light, looking across to that tyrannical structure. The early



"Personally, I prefer a piano bar."

songs, like "There's a Place" and "It Won't Be Long," would be taking shape in his mind, high and thin sounds, with harmonicas, while the cathedral just stood there—sulking, massive, waiting to be redeemed by the sharp-edged tone of a Rickenbacker electric twelve-string.

During the noisy weeks of that British trimester, I could not have imagined the silence my classmates and I would soon be graduating into. I could not have foreseen how important the cartoons and commercials on my little Zenith portable would become, ringing through so many long afternoons, with songs for Cocoa Puffs and Malibu Barbie's Beach Bus. In the months after graduation, everything seemed wounded—the toy tanks and troop carriers advertised on television demobilized into Wilderness Adventure Wagons; G.I. Joe disarmed, bearded, sensitive. It was horrible just to glance at the headlines of the newspapers that cluttered my bungalow when I was checking the classifieds every day. Even the music had been wounded—sculpted and styled into the artsy rococo of Yes and Genesis. The only program from those days that I can still bring myself to care about is the old "Mary Tyler Moore Show," especially the shots of Mary walking through Minneapolis

on a winter day or hurrying across the street with a bag of groceries in her arms.

I AM sitting here in the nineties, thinking about days in the seventies when I chose to live and walk among the remains of the fifties and sixties, and could have used some encouragement about the eighties. I would like to go back and tell myself that the low overcast I remember as always being up there had a remarkable amount of space above it; that it was really not the sky at all, only a kind of drop ceiling—as in the joke Italians would be telling, about the new Pope's plan to remodel the Sistine Chapel.

It would have been enough if I could have known only that the sun was there, above the bungalows; that after a few years my poverty would prove to be as insubstantial as my education; and that there would be a moment in the future—I would be on business, with somebody else paying for it—when my plane would break through the top of the clouds. It will be the first time in days that I have seen the open sky. The plane's shadow shrinks downward, ringed by a dull rainbow, until the clouds flatten out into a yeasty froth like the surface of brewer's wort.

All over the cabin on a morning flight you can smell the coffee as it is rolled down the aisle on its stainless-steel wagon. The same magazine peeks from every seat pocket. Those who didn't bring newspapers will soon be "Discovering the Secrets of San Diego." You can tell that it's winter, by the smallness of the sun as it slants into the round-cornered windows on the other side of the aircraft—a row of them, like television sets in an appliance store. You can look down into the cloud cover, paced off by the trailing edge of the wing, and think of all the towns hidden under it, all the real estate in various stages of transition from residential

zoning to temporary slum to commercial frontage. I particularly like to think about Minneapolis, about how it looks in color in the opening credits of Mary's show—an aerial view of downtown, everything in the low skyline tinted a deep red. A smiling, frightened Mary Tyler Moore steers her white Mustang onto the downtown exit ramp of her new city. The colors in the tape my local station uses are so distorted that when Mary smiles, with the sun through the windshield lighting her face, she looks as if she has gold teeth.

I love to watch her as she drives into the rusty shades of a city that lives from decade to decade in a perpetual winter of jagged chimneys, plumes of rising steam, and that pointed brown clock tower in the middle of downtown. People in long overcoats are rushing along the walkways, bustling in and out of elevators. Old green-and-white municipal buses pass by. Mary stops in the middle of the sidewalk, bundled against the cold in a navy-blue coat with silver buttons; and, like a discus thrower winding up, or like a kid in the commercial for the Super Zoom-erang, she spins around in a slow-motion twirling of freeze frames, and throws her hat up into the air.

—EDWARD ALLEN

CROSSWORDS

I DON'T have much truck with spirits, ghosts, all that. Some people like it and are full of stories of haunted houses and the dead returning. When I was in grade school there was a little draw out past our end of town that the children dared each other to pass alone at evening, and boasted about next day—"I seen the Indian!" There was supposed to be this ghost of an Indian man, killed there way back when, would come and stand under the trees. An easy thing to see in the twilight if you're looking for it, and they were, so as to boast. I don't understand that triumph people take in telling about seeing ghosts, like they were smarter than others to have seen them, or had outwitted common sense. The Irish beat all for that. A sensible man like Mr. Carey would go ranting on about the second sight when he happened to remember that his grandfather was from Ireland. He'd tell how his mother in Oregon had a premonition of her brother's automobile accident in Ohio and had shouted out at the dinner table, "Oh, John's in great danger!" And sure enough, he'd run his car into a ditch that very day and was nearly killed. Why he drove into a ditch wasn't part of the story. Maybe he saw a leprechaun, though not likely in Ohio. I am impatient with such stuff. I don't think there are matters that are outside of nature, or that things can happen any way different from the way things do happen. I think that things happen in nature that we don't altogether understand, and to call them ghosts is to make sure we will not understand. The best we can do is not to put a name to them, but to listen. I learned that from Terina Adams.

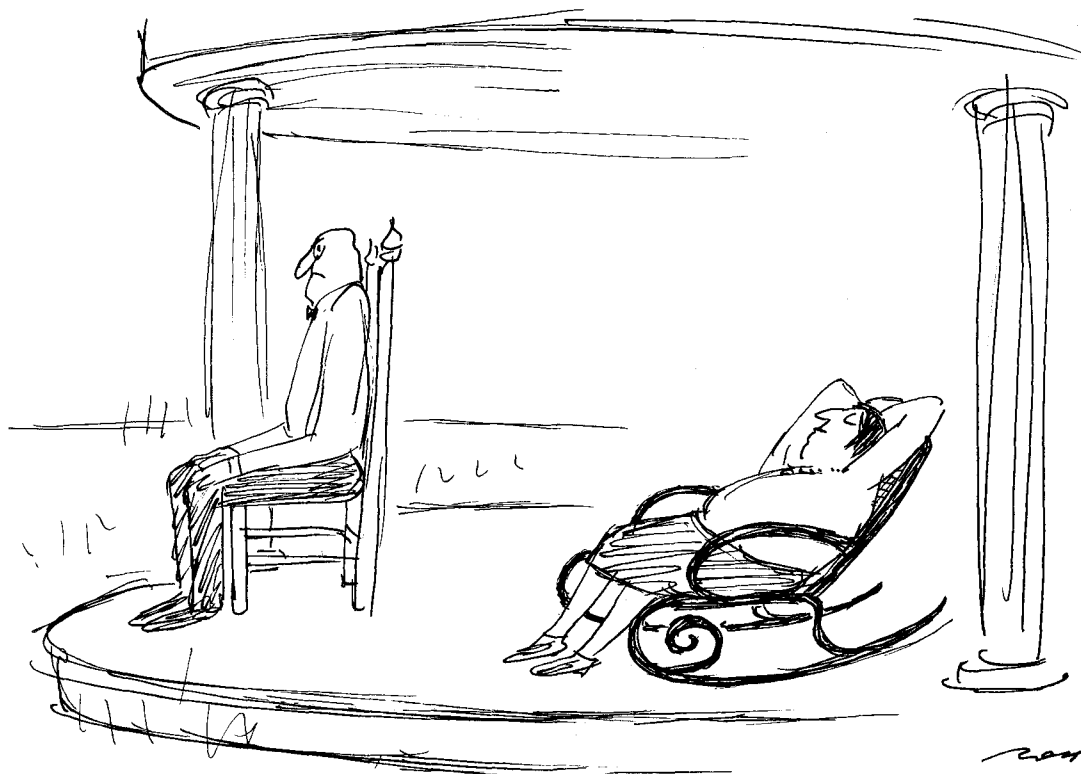
I met her when I was working as a waitress at the Hiway House of Waffles, on the graveyard shift. As I had no family with me at that time it was easier for me than for the women with children or a husband home, and I was curious

to try and see how I liked night work. At first I liked it well enough. The work was easy. Often there'd be a whole hour when nobody came in, and then it would just be a trucker or a couple driving all night, not fussy, not even talkative. Then the day would begin to break and the pace would liven up, but I was off at seven, just before it got heavy with the breakfast people. It suited me fine to see the sun rise. But I think sleeping in daylight began to trouble me some way. At any rate, all the time I worked nights, I was troubled by thoughts of my mother.

Thoughts of her hadn't much bothered me before. I left home at seventeen and went to Los Angeles and got married. After my stepfather died I did visit home in Chico several times so that my babies could see their grandmother and she could see them. She seemed kind of worried and lifeless that couple of years, and I had to try to sort out her taxes and property because she couldn't do it, though she didn't trust my doing it either. She would play with the babies, though, and made a big fuss of Joey specially. Irma was so big and so bald, she wasn't pretty as a baby, and Mama didn't much take to her. Anyhow, then Mama sold the house and married that Pentecostal. He liked me about as much as I liked him, so I didn't

come up to Chico again for years. She never tried to come and see the kids. We hardly even talked on the phone. I sent birthday and Xmas cards. I got divorced, and then married Tom, and divorced him, and then the kids' father suddenly wanted custody. He could afford the lawyers, so he got the kids. At that time I was drinking. I had started drinking along with Tom, and I'd had the sense to get loose from him but not from it. When I was drunk one night it seems I decided to go and see my mother. When I got sober I was two hundred miles up I-5, so I went on and drove the rest of the way to Chico. It was the middle of the day when I got there. I had to look in the telephone book, not remembering the street, and when I was in the telephone booth I couldn't think of my mother's married name. I looked up Churches in the yellow pages and started looking for Pentecostal ads that might say the preacher's name, and just then I remembered that he was called Budd, Ronald (Buddy) Budd. So I found the address, not far from where we used to live with my stepfather.

She answered the door. First she stayed behind the screen door, finally she opened it. Her hair was gray and looked like she hadn't set or even combed it, and her skin was kind of blotched with big dark spots. It was summer, hot, and she was wearing



a sleeveless dress that showed her blotched arms. She weighed at most ninety pounds, I would guess. She had a look of terror in her eyes so terrible to see that I said, "Mama! What is wrong?" as if I'd seen her yesterday instead of not for seven years. And she took hold of me as if she was a drowning woman and I was a lifeguard. She just said my name and held on to me.

Then I heard the preacher, "Who's that? Who's that?" and she clutched harder.

She said, "Ailie," in a whisper, "Ailie, he *twists* me," staring at me the way a scared animal stares. Then she let go and backed away and turned to him and ducked her body and said, "It's my daughter, Ronald."

He got between us right away. He was a good enough looking man, smooth and gray and pink, but he smelled strange. I remembered that as soon as he got near me. He smelled like nail polish, like he'd been preserved.

He asked me in, and we sat in the front room and talked some. He talked, mostly. He asked about my children. My mother looked as if she didn't know what children. I said their father had them. She said then, "Oh, Ailie, don't let your father have them!" I said, "Their father, Mama, not my father!" She looked confused, and then she kind of laughed. She got us iced tea. I stayed about an hour, I guess. He talked about some program they had at his church.

I went to stay at a motel out on the highway. They hadn't asked where I was staying or was I on the way somewhere. When they didn't ask at first, I decided to say, if they did ask, "I'm on my way to Oregon to a job and just thought I would stop by." But they didn't ask.

I stayed at the motel that night and next day I got back on I-5 and drove up into Oregon. Why not? My car had fuel-line trouble in Eugene, and while I was waiting for it to be fixed I looked at the classifieds. There was a vegetarian restaurant wanted an experienced waitress. That was me.

They were nice kids. After a month they gave me a week off to go down to L.A. and get my stuff. My second year there I worked in the kitchen and learned that kind of cooking. They didn't have a license at the restaurant, and I never drank from the time I drove the car up I-5 to Chico until I came over here to the coast, three years ago

THE MARRIAGE SCULPTOR

As we wandered, bored, in the halls of The Great Museum,
we came upon a late work of the sculptor
which made us stop and catch our breaths, so fine
the embrace of spirits, so expressive the bright pour

of leaning light, so rich the exchanging changes.
"One of his finest!" we all said, and brought
its image as souvenir to dangle before us.
In time, Time's tempests struck what had been wrought.

The piece, we saw, dispirited, was splintered
into wild beams that wildly searched through a dark
where changes lay in scatters. Then we saw
the sculptor, the Old Master, disembark.

Blind to us all, he turned his rapt face
to the wreck. "Safe. My materials, safe. All.
Now I must start my making. I see it—spirit,
light, change—more brilliant and powerful,

a larger work." Nothing human is perfect,
we thought. What can shelter the next from storm?
He spoke tenderly to his elements: "Beauty
learns from beauty, the first costly form

lies coiled in the last." Then, "I am not Eros.
Since Time is made out of it (who calls himself King),
the human stuff I work with is stronger than Time,"
he said to us, who thought we had lost something.

—MONA VAN DUYN

now, and began to have a glass of red wine with dinner when I feel like it. Anyhow, two years at the Dandelion in Eugene was enough. I came up to Portland and got the job cooking for Mr. Carey at Pecan Pie Catering Company, and started getting lawyers lined up to get me some rights to my kids. It turned out all I had to do was ask, since their father's new wife couldn't stand teen-agers. I got them back and saw them through high school.

It was hard at first. They'd been living higher off the hog with their father. And they had to leave all their friends in L.A., and Joey had been doing a lot of surfing. But as soon as I could get him the skiing stuff he started going to Mt. Hood, and then he was fine. Irma held out. She had learned some ugly ways and she wasn't going to spare me one of them. Drugs was what I was afraid of, because I feel I don't understand that, but it was liquor

she decided to go in for, at thirteen. I was what you could call an expert in that. We worked through it. It took a lot of work, but she got herself straight. But she overdid it. She went and became a born-again, which took her away from me in the other direction. But she was an honors student at her school.

It was in those years that my mother died. I was not notified in time for her funeral.

When Mr. Carey retired and closed the firm, Irma was working for a year-round Xmas shop over in Cannon Beach, and Joey was in the Coast Guard. I took on the Hiway House of Waffles job mostly because it was so handy to where I lived, south of Portland. I could be there in two minutes in my car. So then I went on the late shift, as I said. And after a couple of weeks, Terina Adams came on that shift, too.

Terina was a very quiet person, reserved. She was proud. I thought stuck-up, at first. When Yance, the night cook, would make the kind of jokes he did, she didn't smile. I always smiled. It was easier to smile. It's like there's a



ANCIENT LANDMARKS

OF NEW YORK CITY

kind of oil that makes their wheels go round, and smiling is part of it, women smiling. They expect it, and when they don't get it they may not know what's missing but they tend to seize up and get mean, like a motor you don't oil. Well, Terina didn't give out any oil. To me either. She was civil and polite, but a mouth like a straight line. It was like she was deaf. And she looked heavy. I don't mean overweight. She was filled out, but very trim. I mean her look was heavy as if there was a weight in her, weighing down her steps and her head. She kept her eyes down, even. So it seemed like she held herself away, and if that was what she wanted, fine with me. I liked it best those nights when nobody was talking, anyhow.

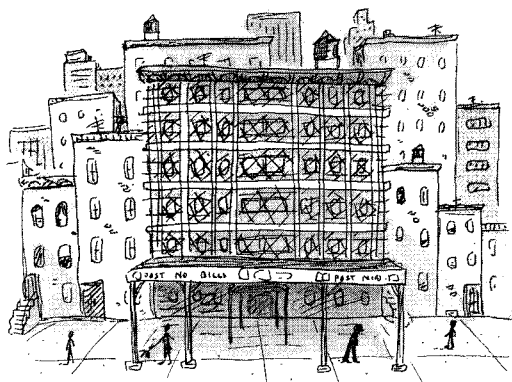
I didn't use my head about Terina until when I was in the john, which had a thin wall on the kitchen side, and heard Yance say to Bert, "Tarbaby ain't here yet."

I thought, Well, you are a fool, Ailie.

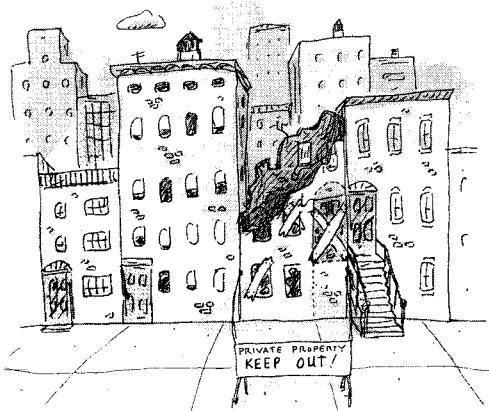
She wasn't only the only black person working in the restaurant but the only black person in it ever. In Oregon the whites and blacks and Chicanos and Indians all tend to keep by themselves, and outside Portland you could think there wasn't anything but whites. And the usual number of them are Yances. So no wonder she wasn't going around oiling anybody's machinery any more than she had to. As soon as there came a time I saw her having a cup of coffee in the back booth of her station, I went over and started asking her did she have family and so on, pushing at her, pushing at that weight in her, until she began to give a little. Like moving a stalled car. But it got going, finally, some.

Terina never wanted to talk much, but she liked me all right. It was hard

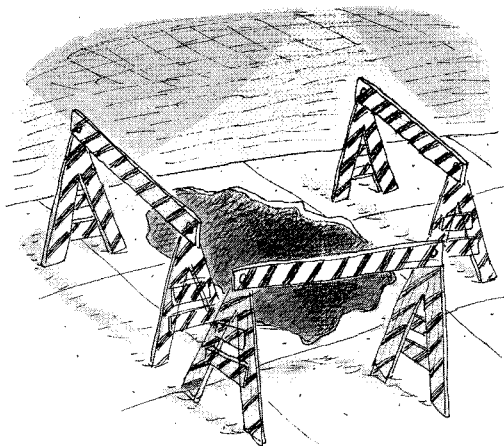
Scaffold, West 81st Street
Is believed to have originated
in the early 12th century A.D.



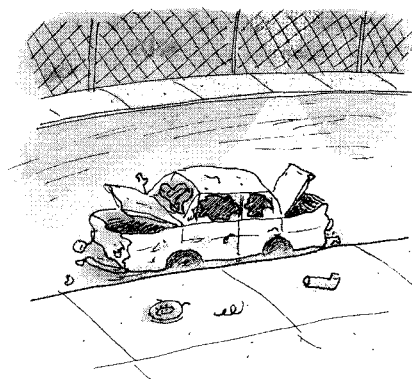
Half-Deconstructed Town House,
East 19th Street
References to it have been found in
the Old Testament.



Sidewalk Crater, Amsterdam Avenue
Has been there since the time
of the Pharaohs.



Abandoned Automobile, Riverside Drive
Fragments have been carbon-dated
to the Jurassic period.



R. Christ

for her to talk. That weight in her, she just carried it around because there was nowhere to put it down. Most of it I never found out about. Her son who was twenty was living with her, and she said that she could leave him nights, now, but when he got worse she would have to stop working. I was thinking how to ask what was wrong when she asked me not to say anything about her son to anybody there because she was afraid of how they would act, and Mr. Benaski might fire her if he knew. So I guessed I knew enough.

"Don't tell that Yance," she said. I said that if I saw Yance's beard was on fire I wasn't sure I'd notify him. That drew that straight-line mouth out a little bit.

In fact, watching Terina, I had begun sparing the oil, saving it for when I wanted to use it. Maybe they all needed it, but not all of them deserved it, I thought. Why waste it on the Yances?

But all the time I was getting to know and admire Terina, there was this weight of my own in me. Nothing

like hers, but still I kept thinking about my mother. It was as if I had something to puzzle out, kind of like a crossword, where you have a word down, say, but you haven't figured out the ones across it. I like crosswords. Often I'd do the one in the paper, those long nights. I did them to keep from thinking, because whatever I started thinking about, it would end up with my mother.

If she was the puzzle, then the word down I had was what she said—"Oh, Ailie, don't let your father have them!"

She didn't mean my real father. He was killed in the South Pacific when I was three. She meant her second husband, my stepfather, Harold. She always called him "your father" to me. Whatever "your father" did was wonderful. If it wasn't wonderful he hadn't done it. That was the rule. That's where I learned to think like that. But where did she learn it, why did she learn it? What she said—don't let him have them—sounded like she knew about the feel-good games, but if she did know, if she had known, why did she let him have me? Maybe she thought then that they were all right. Maybe they were all right. It was only his fingers. When I try to think about it, it always seems like I didn't exactly mind, because if I had I would have got away, somehow. Or I would have told her. But I did try to tell her, once. That's why I still don't know what she knew and what she thought, because all she said was the rule: "Your father loves you and would never hurt you." And it was true it didn't hurt. He kept saying, "Doesn't that feel good now, doesn't that feel good," kind of crooning, and I didn't know if it did, but I knew it was supposed to. She must have found what I called the shaving cream in my bed, but what did she think about it? I kept thinking about that—what did she think about it? Did she think I'd wet the bed, or spilled something? She never asked. What did she think when she washed the sheets? Where did she learn to think what she thought?

My stepfather sort of tapered off in my life when I started having my periods and getting my growth. I got tall all in one year, between twelve and thirteen, and I got wise, too, at least for a kid that age, and it was like I began to scare Harold off. He couldn't come at me with his feel-good games

when I was nearly his size. I think my big figure did frighten him, because he got prim and prissy. He was always after my mother to make me "dress decently," not to wear shorts or halter tops, when it was a hundred and three or a hundred and four degrees in Chicago. I had turned into a big woman, and he was a little man. He was suited that way to my mother, who wasn't short but was very fine-boned. As I look back I think they weren't a bad match, as marriages go. But what about Ronald (Buddy) Budd? That was a whole other part of the puzzle, and I didn't seem to know any of the definitions.

Was she maybe sick, that last time I saw her? When she died they said pneumonia, but maybe she had had a cancer, to pull her down like that into a concentration-camp person, a little bent stick. Was that what she was so terrified of? But then why did she say those words I couldn't make sense of at all, "He twists me!" I kept thinking that it meant something that he was doing to her mind, like they say that people have twisted minds.

I was in the john at about three in the morning, a long, cold night in November, some ice on the roads, hardly anybody in the restaurant since eleven. I had washed my hands and was straightening my uniform blouse, smoothing it down, because it wasn't cut full enough for me. Those words came into my mind again, and I felt them. I knew exactly what they meant. I knew they meant exactly what they said. My hair raised up and a kind of sick flush ran all over my face and body. I wanted to throw up for a minute. Then it passed and all I wanted was to get out of that john with its poison smell of sweet cherry disinfectant. I came out. Terina was just going into the kitchen. I thought she looked startled, but my mind was not on her.

A couple of fellows came in from the semi that had just pulled up, and I gave them the red carpet. They were nice men, from the San Joaquin Valley, had been in before on their Seattle run, and I just poured out the oil. I wanted company, I wanted to laugh at some jokes, I wanted to like them.

I kept them an hour. When they left, Terina came over, and we went to the back booth and had a smoke.

"Who is the woman, Ailie?" she asked.

"What woman?" I asked her.

She looked at me, lifting up her eyes under their heavy lids. Terina was dark-skinned, with eyes a color lighter than her skin.

"She's shorter than you, about my height, and her hair's white and kind of tufty-like. She has a blue-and-white housedress. She's real thin. Her arms are like sticks, and sort of bruised-looking, like leukemia, you know? I saw her with you once before. Tonight I saw her instead of you. Coming out of the ladies' room. I saw her first, and then I looked twice and saw you."

"It's my mama," I said.

"I thought maybe," she said. After a minute she asked, "Is she alive?"

I shook my head.

Terina didn't ask anything more. I said, "I have been carrying her around lately."

"We have that to do," she said, and after a while, "Trying to listen."

"That's it," I said. "Trying to listen to what I didn't hear."

Terina nodded, and that was all we said.

That afternoon when I woke up, I went to the telephone before I was hardly awake yet, like I was obeying orders. I called up the drugstore in Klatsand where my daughter had started working last summer. The owner put her on the phone, and I said, "Hi, this is your mother," without any idea what else I was going to say.

She said, "Hi, Mama! I was thinking about you." The way she said it gave me the next word.

I said, "I was thinking I wanted to see you. And maybe move out to some town out there on the coast for a while. I'm fed up here."

"There's three waitress-wanted signs on Main Street," she said. "But you know, Mama, they don't pay shit."

I knew then that she had made her own arrangements with Jesus. I was so relieved about that that I said, "Well! I'll be over next week. Wednesday, maybe. Can you find me a motel till I get settled?"

"I got a couch," she said.

I said, "Irma, do you remember my mother at all?"

She laughed. "No," she said. "Do I have to?"

"No," I said, "but I'll tell you. When I get there."

But I never did. It didn't seem necessary.

—URSULA K. LE GUIN

WHEN people Linda Hunt has worked with in the theatre or in the movies talk about her, the words that come up most often are "authority" and "intelligence." When she talks about herself, she may be one of few actors who almost always specify the sex of a character they have played or will play. She has been Lucianus, who poisons the Player King, in "Hamlet," and in 1983, for her second movie role—the part of Billy Kwan, the dwarf Eurasian photographer in Peter Weir's "The Year of Living Dangerously"—she won the first Academy Award ever given to an actor playing a character of the opposite sex. The part came to her in a roundabout way. In the spring of 1982, with the film already in rehearsal, Weir felt that something was wrong. At first, he thought it might be the script, but after working on that for several days he decided that the problem was the actor playing Kwan. Weir, who was in Australia, called Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, the producers of the film, and told the executives that he had exhausted all the possible actors in Australia and in England; the only place left was the United States. Before travelling to Manila, where the movie was by now in production, he flew to Los Angeles and began auditioning. Weir saw a lot of actors—all of them short and most of them Asian. When he looked at the tapes, though, he saw that none of them would do. In each instance, the actor playing Kwan was competing with the lead character of Guy Hamilton, the young Australian journalist eager for his first scoop, and Weir remembers thinking that if he were Guy Hamilton he'd just get himself another photographer. Finally, the casting director, Joe D'Agosta, showed Weir a photograph of an actor whom he described as height-appropriate, highly trained, and successful in Off Broadway productions. When D'Agosta added that the actor was a woman, Weir blanched. But, he says, by that time he was seeing people from the circus.



"I just kept saying 'Who's next?'" Weir says. "And at some point D'Agosta said, 'It's that woman I told you about.' And I said, 'Oh, come on, this is terrible. Please just tell her that we're terribly sorry but it won't do, and thank her for coming.' But he said, 'Why don't you just see her?'" And so Linda Hunt came in. I *liked* her. I was struck by her femininity. She told me a lot about the character—she said that to be very small was a more acute pain for a man than for a woman. And by then I was desperate, actually, so I said, 'Let's try a test,' and we hired a studio, on a Sunday. Linda came out of make-up looking ludicrous. Absurd. Like someone at a children's fancy-dress party. But what was interesting was that everything changed when I spoke the lines of the Guy Hamilton character and she answered as Billy Kwan. Gone was the competitiveness. This was a person who had secrets, who was intriguing, who was alive—really *alive*. She reminded me of Nanjiharra, an aboriginal chief I know. Freddie Fields was the head of the studio, and I sent Linda out to see him secretly. I wasn't going to rely on just the screen test. Then I said to him, 'I have three tests. This Asian guy you like, this—well-known—Caucasian actor, and Linda Hunt.' And he loved her. The only thing was that he wanted to put

'L. Phipps Hunt' on the contract. It was an undercover operation. Freddie brought in all these marketing people to see the tests. He said to them, 'Guess what, the last one was a woman.' There was absolute silence. I went back to the crew, who were very excited and said, 'Did you get him, did you get him?' And I said, 'Yes. It's a woman.' Russell Boyd, our cameraman, just said, '*Why?*' I couldn't do much more than encourage her, and not doubt her. I don't think I ever doubted her. I knew it would work. And what Linda did was so extraordinary that for a while I thought there was a problem when Billy Kwan went out of the picture. And what courage she had! She told me a story once of a waiter

coming into her bedroom with a room-service breakfast. She got out of bed to open the door, and he said, 'Where shall I put the tray, sir?' She said that that was the first time she wept during the filming. Because she was Linda then, not Billy Kwan."

ON the stage, Hunt has played both a queen—Elizabeth I, in George Trow's "Elizabeth Dead," in 1980—and a regal Pope Joan, in Caryl Churchill's "Top Girls," in 1983. (Of Hunt's Joan the play's director, Max Stafford-Clark, says, "You believed Linda could be Pope. She is incisive, and she brings onto the stage a sense of her own world and her own values.") Hunt has also played the title role in Brecht's "Mother Courage," and twice played Charlotta Ivanovna, the governess who does magic tricks, in "The Cherry Orchard." In 1984, she played the literary agent Audrey Wood in Arthur Kopit's play "The End of the World," and was nominated for a Tony Award; and in "Aunt Dan and Lemon," by Wallace Shawn, which was put on at the Royal Court, in London, and at the Public Theatre in 1985, Hunt played Aunt Dan, the mesmerizing Oxford don whose forceful conversation leaves her protégée, Lemon, ready to commiserate with the Nazis. Hunt's Aunt Dan proved un-

nerving even to her fans, who were used to seeing her portray more sympathetic characters. Mel Gussow wrote, in the *Times*, that Hunt had been cast too much against type, but her friend the actress Kate Nelligan thought the trouble was that Hunt as Aunt Dan was too convincing an argument for Fascism. "Linda is very spare, Linda is very smart," Nelligan says. "Other people say, 'Oh, you can't do this to me,' and Linda says, 'You can't do this, period.' She has a jesuitical quality."

In 1988, Hunt had the title role in Emily Mann's one-woman play "Annula: An Autobiography," which is about the life of an Eastern European refugee. The play ran at the New Theatre for four weeks, and all the performances were sold out. Emily Mann, who was also the director, recalled recently, "I said, 'Why would Linda Hunt come and do it in Brooklyn for twenty cents a week?' But she did. Here she is, a WASP, and she understands this little Jewish lady, and she knows how it was to be a Jew in the thirties." Arvin Brown, the artistic director of the Long Wharf Theatre, in New Haven, where Linda Hunt did much of her work in the seventies, says, "What I've never seen Linda lose, and what she'll never need to lose—and it's in every role she's done—is her dignity and stillness."

One of Hunt's first appearances in front of the camera was in a part that Arthur Miller wrote for her in a tele-

vision play called "Fame," which was broadcast in 1978, in the Hallmark Hall of Fame series. Hunt, who is four feet nine inches tall and weighs eighty pounds, played a female jockey named Mona, who has given up her dream of becoming an actress because of her physical limitations. ("You can speak frankly," Mona says to Meyer Shine, a playwright who has been asked to consider casting her. "I've been small all my life.") Arthur Miller says, "With some good actors, you know they're good without seeing them act. Seeing Linda, I immediately wished I could have her in something. Anyway, I insisted that she play Mona, and there was no argument. I still think the only person to do her justice would be Fellini. With lesser actors, who are less complicated, it's easier to identify their particular gift, but when you get someone who is full of secret energy, a persona that's not the sum of its parts, it's a different kind of algebra."

Linda Hunt's first film role was as the fighter Oxblood Oxheart's mother in Robert Altman's "Popeye," in 1980. "I love her, she's a floozy," says Mr. Altman, who also cast Hunt recently in a television adaptation of Harold Pinter's early play "The Room." "For 'The Room' I needed a mature actress. So I thought, Julie Christie, Vanessa Redgrave, Linda Hunt. I just know if I put her in a role she *is* that role. She doesn't imitate anyone."

In the eighties, following the success

of "The Year of Living Dangerously" ("The thing that amazed me about Linda's Billy wasn't the poetry but how virile he was," says Sigourney Weaver, who had a lead role in the film), Hunt played Stella, the tiny, terrifically feminine saloonkeeper, in Lawrence Kasdan's Western "Silverado" ("She's so economical and slightly mystical," says Kasdan, who wrote the part of Stella—she serves as the conscience of the picture, a sort of Billy Kwan turned inside out—specially for Hunt). She was also Shadeout Mapes, in David Lynch's "Dune"; Katina, a part Kate Nelligan suggested that Hunt play, in "Eleni," the film adaptation of the book by Nicholas Gage; Mary Prance, the prematurely emancipated doctor in Merchant-Ivory's adaptation of "The Bostonians" ("It's rare to find someone who speaks so well," James Ivory says. "We were just struck by her air of being on top of things"); and Alice B. Toklas in "Waiting for the Moon," directed by Jill Godmilow. Last year, Hunt played Nurse Hooper in Susan Seidelman's film "She-Devil," based on the book by Fay Weldon. This year, in addition to a small part in Arnold Schwarzenegger's new film, "Kindergarten Cop," she will play a villainess, Ilsa Grunt, in a movie co-starring the young television actor Richard Grieco. Hunt says of this film, "Life gets more absurd every minute. First it was called 'Teen Agent' and then 'Nothing but Trouble.' Now it's called 'If Looks Could Kill.'"



"Try twenty-three left."

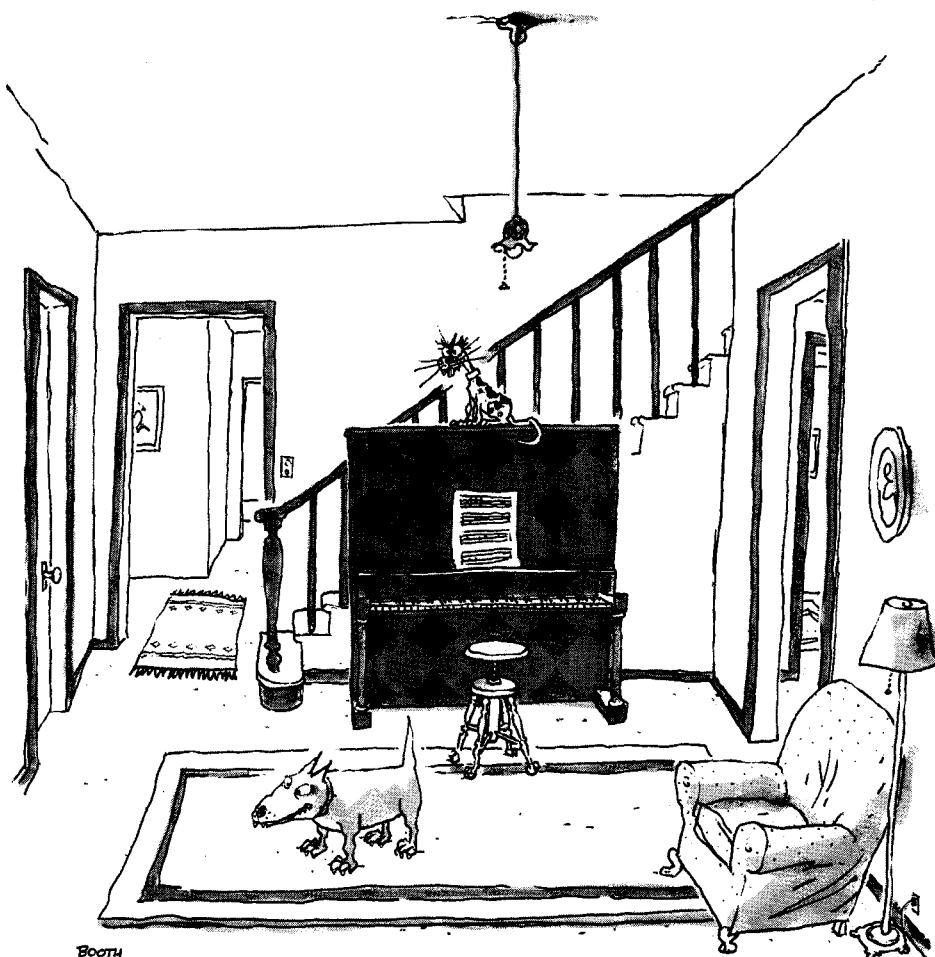
IT is midafternoon, in the middle of winter, and Linda Hunt, in black trousers and a navy jersey, is sitting in a corner of a sofa in the lobby of the Algonquin Hotel. One foot is tucked under her. The lobby is undergoing something between cleaning and renovation, and some chairs are topsyturvy. The hotel cat is looking for its accustomed seat. Hunt is drinking Dry Sack-on-the-rocks, which is what her father drank. She has beautiful hands, which she says resemble her father's. Her hair, very fine and chestnut-colored, is cut in a Dutch-boy helmet that covers all but the lobes of her ears. She has a high forehead, large blue eyes, and a wide, expressive mouth, and her face looks a little like that of Prince Baltasar Carlos in the court portraits so lovingly painted by Velázquez. From moment to moment, she looks either

decades older or decades younger than her age, which is forty-five. Her movements are precise. "With Linda, *nothing's* casual," her friend the dancer Martha Clarke says. Austin Pendleton, who directed Linda Hunt the first time she played Charlotta Ivanovna, in 1981, and later taught her in his acting class, says, "People fall in love with Linda. Lust, passion, obsession. I had an actor friend—a tall, handsome, lop-sided Irish guy—and he said to me, 'I dream about her all the time.'" Another old friend says, "Think of it—the premium that is placed on personal appearance for actors. Instead of deciding to become something where personal appearance wouldn't mean anything, she said, 'People are staring at me. I am going to make that my profession and turn it into an art.' It's an extraordinary decision. It's an *outrageously* defiant choice."

Hunt is talking about work. "The system is set up so that you do certain films so that you can do other films, and so that you can afford to work in the theatre," she says. "For so long, I had no money. My life seemed to progress at a very slow pace. In New York, my first apartment was the size of a shoebox. I lived in it for years, and then I moved to an apartment, in the same building, that was the size of an Evian carton. But after 'The Year of Living Dangerously' my life turned around three hundred sixty degrees."

"You must mean a hundred and eighty," I say.

"Or else back to the womb? *Right*. But there really is a sharp divide. I hate to admit it. Something was changing at that moment in my life. Was there something changing?" She peers intently from under her bangs. "Was the film a part of something happening to me, or do I get swept out of my life and into the film?" She raises her glass and grins. "I always suspect success. There is nothing worse than an idea whose time has come. In a film, you work off certain layers of yourself, and I wonder whether they get caught in the film and left behind. I feel I am very much *done* with 'The Year of Living Dangerously.' But other people are not. I am consistently, still, identified with Billy Kwan. It doesn't have to do with the obvious things about him—his world view, his philosophy. It's the things that fall between the lines of the character. Once, I was asked if the politics



Sunday P.M. July 15, 1990, in the Waternods' Living Room, with the Waternods' Dog and Mr. Wu Lung's Cat from Next Door

of 'The Year of Living Dangerously' had any effect on my wanting to make that movie, and I said, 'Not at all.'

When Linda Hunt gestures with her hands, the rest of her body stays still. Now she lets her right hand press against an invisible upward force. When she speaks, she often holds her hands together, upright, and then opens them, as if to let a bird held there escape. Because she is compulsive about making herself clear, she says, she repeats things over and over. She is also given to lengthy silences. Her friend Emily Mann says, "She can hold a pause longer than any living actor. You can read the thoughts of the character in the air above her head."

When Hunt was fourteen, she played Mrs. Malaprop in a junior-high-school production and was told by her English teacher that her performance would be terrific if the play were a silent film—no one could hear her. Angry, she went home and taught herself elocution by listening to Rex Har-

rison in "My Fair Lady." In a year, she wore two long-playing records smooth.

"First-grade acting: what you say is as important as how you say it," she says now. "Perhaps the reason I feel at home in the theatre is that it can't be speeded up. The theatre changes, but acting doesn't. Now no one thinks about how long it takes for a worthwhile process to occur. The manner of acting changes; with the dawn of Freud and Stanislavsky, what we think of as good acting has changed enormously. But Duse, for instance, who was a great example to me—a great abstraction in the past—would have been a great actress in Sophocles' plays or in our own time. So, in a way, I don't know if the spirit of great art is really ever threatened. There are still going to be these exceptional people. It's the *quality* of life that is threatened. For *mankind*." She laughs, shaking the ice in her glass. "We live in a time when the demands of the vulgar are being

met. This. Has. Never. Happened. Before." She brings out each word singly.

When Linda Hunt went to study with Austin Pendleton, he pointed out to her that her every beat was defined. He thought that this would be O.K., he told me, if it became a characteristic of her work rather than an obstacle to it. "Her eyes lit up," Pendleton said. "With a talent the size of Linda's, you say, 'You have a problem. What are you going to do about it?' What one has to remember is that there is this technical—let's say—'peculiarity' on one side of the coin, but the magic is on the other. You don't want to melt the whole thing down."

In the hotel lobby, the cat has nuzzled itself around Linda Hunt's free leg. She says, looking up, "Exceptions will always exist, but civilization may not. I do think the only things that will remain pure in our culture are things that are so extreme they can't be trifled with. The great cry now is 'It's not enough! It could be more!' So it could be more, but it won't be itself anymore."

LINDA HUNT was born in Morristown, New Jersey, on April 2, 1945, to Raymond Davy Hunt and Elsie Doying Hunt. Soon after her birth, the family, which included her sister, Marcia, five years older, moved to Westport, Connecticut, to a house on a rise above the Saugatuck River; she lived there until she was fifteen, when she went to boarding school. Mrs. Hunt, who had put herself through the Detroit Conservatory, taught piano at the Westport School of Music and accompanied the Saugatuck Congregational Church choir, and the music that Linda Hunt knew best as a child was the Bach preludes and fugues she would hear her mother playing downstairs while she lay in bed at night. Raymond Hunt, who died in 1985, worked for thirty years as a vice-president of Harper Fuel Oil, in Long Island City. Every day, he would make the long drive from Westport and the long drive back. In the summer, the Hunts gave breakfast parties on the beach which lasted well into the afternoon and were attended by local friends and weekend houseguests. Linda Hunt salts her conversation with phrases crystallized during this period of her life. "This is bound to be a lesson" is one, and "This is bound to be a first

step" is another. Robert Altman, who met Mr. and Mrs. Hunt in Malta when they came to visit Linda on the set of "Popeye," says, "They reminded me of a couple who lived in a house behind us, in Kansas City, who were neat and clean and precise. Quiet, and in

HOME

House of umbrage, house of fear,
house of multiplying air

House of memories that grow
like shadows out of Allan Poe

House where marriages go bust,
house of telephone and lust

House of caves, behind whose door
a wave is crouching with its roar

House of toothbrush, house of sin,
of branches scratching "Let me in!"

House whose rooms echo with rain,
of wrinkled clouds with Onan's stain

House that creaks, age fifty-seven,
wooden earth and plaster heaven

House of channelled CableVision
whose dragoned carpets sneer derision

Unlucky house that I uncure
by rites of genuflecting verse

House I unhouse, house that can harden
as cold as stones in the lost garden

House where I look down the scorched street
but feel its ice ascend my feet

I do not live in you, I bear
my house inside me, everywhere

until your winters grow more kind
by the dancing firelight of mind

where knobs of brass do not exist,
whose doors dissolve with tenderness

House that lets in, at last, those fears
that are its guests, to sit on chairs

feasts on their human faces, and
takes pity simply by the hand

shows her her room, and feels the hum
of wood and brick becoming home.

—DEREK WALCOTT

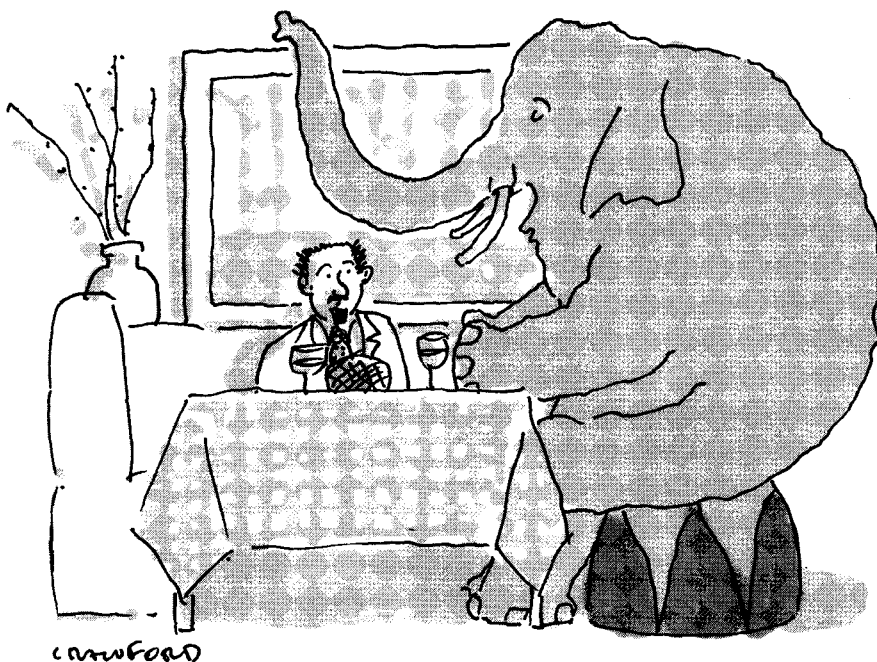
control of themselves. They matched, and they had these pure smiles, like the smiles a child draws on people. I would change my language around them, I remember."

"They loved it," Linda says of that visit. "I think Daddy was particularly

awed every time he went to the set. They were a handsome couple, well into their seventies, with an air of solidity about them. Everyone was lovely to them. I think I enjoyed showing them off: they weren't monsters. When I was a child, I was outcast by other children, and I had a sense of my parents' being supranormal, refined people. That I was their child meant to me that I was O.K.—that I *wasn't* this second-class person that kids liked to make me feel I was. Kids know about each other. They smell it. When my parents came to Malta, I could bring them to this life, and it was wonderful, finally, to have an opportunity to be generous with them after they'd been through so much with me. But there was also the ancient feeling of saying, on the set, 'See, you guys, I really *am* O.K.,' because these are my parents, and I am of them. It was like having a pedigree."

The first sign that something might be amiss appeared when Linda Hunt was about six months old. Her motor development seemed slow. Her mother took her to Babies Hospital in New York, and the doctor who examined her suspected what he managed to call "cretinism." This was in 1945, and the doctor implied that he was sure Linda would eventually have to be institutionalized. Her mother staunchly refused to believe it, and, together with Annabelle Lewis, a nurse who lived in Westport and ran the Educational Toy Shop, she rigged up a series of graspable toys in Linda's crib.

"My mother worked with me every day," Hunt says. "And I began to come around. A year later, Mom took me back to Babies Hospital, and that doctor had to eat his words. In my early teens, the problem was discovered to be hypopituitary dwarfism—a condition in which the pituitary gland does not release enough growth hormone. At that time, the only antidote for this condition was to take actual human-pituitary extract, which was extremely rare. It was used only for research, and was monitored by the government. I couldn't get it. They were working miracles with the thyroid then, and they were starting to give estrogen to aging women, but my problem was far removed from anything like that. Dr. Eugene Cohen, the first endocrinologist I saw, was a romantic figure to me, although I resented deeply that



"I think I'd like to start seeing other elephant trainers, Rolf."

he couldn't do anything for me. I hated the duplicity of it all. The *abracadabra*. I had a whole battery of pills, but I would flush them down the toilet because I knew that they weren't doing me any good.

"I think that I felt indicted by that doctor at the hospital, by that world of authority that perceived me in the first months of my life as a *freak of nature*. But there was this other voice, encouraged by my parents and compounded by my reasonableness, that said I should explore the alternatives. At sixteen, I went to another endocrinologist, Raphael David, who was at the forefront of research in the field, and I began to receive intensive treatments of human-pituitary extract off and on, and I grew by fractions of an inch. It became clear that I wasn't responding as expected, and that led to a delightful stay at Bellevue, when I was twenty-one, to find out why. My beloved friend Dana Chalberg, who had been my roommate at school, came to see me every day. We cooked up this idea that Dana would sleep in my bed, and the nurses would see her when they came in in the morning. Dana is almost six feet tall, and big all over, and she has strawberry-blond hair. '*It's worked!*' they would say.

"When I was twenty-five, I put my foot down and said *no*. My sense of it

was that I just wanted to be left alone to find out who I was. I was taking off the veil. And what was left was me. I felt, This is my path—*just leave me alone*."

Hunt pauses, and then says, "Years ago, I met an actor, a man of normal height, who had been a hypopituitary adolescent. The medical remedy had worked for him. I would look at him and think, What if that had happened to me? The question I would ask him now is: Do you ever think back to a time when you thought you would be too small for the world? I'd like to know how he saw himself, projected into that future. But if you ask me if I liked going through all this, and being the way I am, the answer is yes. That's the answer. What I've been through is like a spring rain compared with what other people have had to deal with. And no, I can't 'imagine' if the treatments had worked. My problems are not foreign to me. The possible solutions were—the salvations. It's the *reflection* that makes it different—whether it's a kid teasing you, or whatever."

Early photographs of Linda Hunt—in a baby carriage, playing king of the mountain, paddling a dinghy—are most striking for the gusto revealed by her expression. In grammar-school class portraits, Hunt, instantly identifi-



"I'm sorry I'm not available to answer you personally right now. Please leave your name and a message with the time and date you tried to reach me, and I'll get back to you as soon as I can. Please wait for the beep."

able, sits at the end of a row, usually the first; her physical proportions are different from those of the other children settled on the steps—her head was then large for her body—but she is memorable also because of how even the official camera captures her animation. In a photograph of her second grade, the other children look straight ahead, but Hunt is eagerly chatting up the little boy next to her. When one is with her now, one is almost never conscious of her size, and it is always startling to be reminded of how small she is: she has to reach up to deposit a coin in a telephone box. "Once, during rehearsals for 'Top Girls,' we gave her a different chair, one that we could fasten a step onto," Max Stafford-Clark says. "It's remarkable only in that it's remarkable we hadn't thought of it. She had to say, 'I can't sit here with my feet dangling.'"

James Ivory says, "When I first saw Linda Hunt, in 'The Tennis Game,' she didn't seem *abnormally* small to me. It didn't strike me. Which must say something about her gift, and her powers of theatrical projection. She

made a most particular impression."

"The Tennis Game" was written specifically for Linda Hunt, by George Trow, at the behest of Lyn Austin, the producing director of the Music-Theatre Group, of Stockbridge, Massachusetts, and New York, and it was produced in 1978. Austin had first met Hunt in 1965, when Hunt was studying directing at the Goodman School of Drama, in Chicago, having decided—for the first of several times over the next decade—that she had little chance for success as an actress. "There was this huge cape, and it was coming down the street," Austin says. "I thought, 'How interesting, a cape flying down the street by itself.' My friend Leora Dana, who was performing at Goodman, had said, 'I have a young assistant director whom I think you'd like to meet.' Leora pointed to the cape and said, 'That's the assistant director.' " One night in 1977, Lyn Austin, of whom Linda Hunt can do a stunning, affectionate imitation ("Great news, *dollar-fifty a week*"), had a dream about a tennis court on which Linda Hunt was the umpire. The week

before, she had taken a walk up Eighth Avenue with Hunt, during which Hunt told her that she was thinking seriously about giving up acting—the opportunities were not exactly rolling in. "I thought, How terrible," Austin says. "And I said, 'Oh, you mustn't do that. We must keep that from happening.' "

George Trow recalls, "One day, Lyn Austin said to me, 'Have you ever thought of writing for the theatre?' We were having lunch at the St. Regis. She said, 'I think it should be about tennis.' That was O.K. I like tennis. I like metaphors. I went over to her house, which was this big limestone building in the East Sixties. Lyn was sitting in one big, grand chair. On her left was Linda Hunt, in another such chair. It took all of two seconds for me to feel I had met someone important. We both sensed that this was a person who wanted to hold the foreground and who hadn't had a chance to do that, and that this was her chance. So the play is about that, really."

Lyn Austin says, "It was the first time Linda wasn't—you know—carrying a spear."

The property list for "The Tennis Game" originally included a very large nineteenth-century book, which Hunt was meant to hold open in her lap as she sat in an umpire's chair. "Of course, Linda is a small woman," Trow says. "And she said, 'I see. I go up, and I go down, but where do I put the book down?' There were very many other moments when she made it quite clear who she was, and that this was her world, the world of the play, and that this was how it was going to be."

Hunt tells me that her experience of authority came through her father. "I would come in at six in the morning. I had a little plastic razor and a little mirror, and I would shave with him."

"Not *watch* him shave?" I ask.

"No. He was a man of immense personal dignity. He was natty. I loved his small personal habits. I can still see *exactly* how he used to tuck in a shirt. There's a line in 'The Tennis Game': 'You've got to go all the way to the top of the line to get that fourth porthole, doll.' He *had* a Buick Roadmaster. He

shopped at Brooks Brothers, period. I would 'get dressed' with Daddy. There really was a ritual to take part in every morning. I don't think my mother ever did anything the same way twice, though."

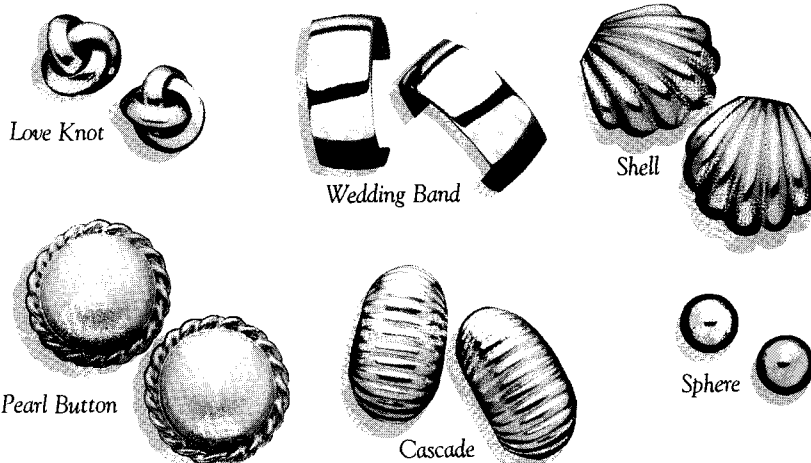
"Does it surprise you that people recognize your authority?" I ask.

"No, because that's what I developed to survive. To survive what I was—how I was different from everyone else. I had this perception in the air around me that there was something wrong with me, and I knew that what was wrong with me *wasn't* wrong with anyone else. And I saw that if you talk in a loud voice people will think you have something to say, so I cultivated a loud voice. And I learned to say all my vowels and consonants. I developed grandeur at a very early age. Say, four. I saw my parents as safe and secure, and I realized that if I could only get to be a grownup I would be safe and secure, too. But I knew that for me it wasn't going to be enough to be a grownup. I was going to have to be a duchess."

Hunt pauses. "School was a torture for me. Have you read the 'Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle' books, by Betty MacDonald? Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle lived in a house that had been built upside down, and she had this way of rescuing kids in trouble. She had a pig named Lester, who was the most exquisite of creatures, and had the best manners, and when there were bad children who ate their peas with a spoon, why, Lester would be invited to dinner. It was very important also to make one's bed properly, because if you didn't—and there *was* a little girl who didn't—Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle might come out of the closet dressed as a witch, and I don't know what, but she scared the shit out of that little girl! Anyway, the one I remember most vividly was about a child who didn't want to go to school. He would hold hot chocolate in his mouth before his mother took his temperature. I was so impressed by this that I tried it, not with anything as good as hot chocolate but with hot water." Hunt fills her mouth with air and then blows out an imaginary candle. "As a matter of fact, I stayed back in second grade, because I hadn't 'got' reading. At turnings, I seemed to lag. I had a teacher whom I adored, but nevertheless I felt profoundly stupid in school, and behaved accordingly, and I had the record of a profoundly stupid person. I

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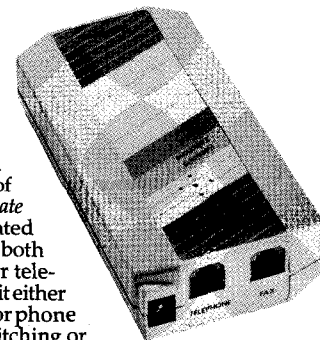
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didn't write dirty words on the wall of the school. I took it out on myself. I would go to see Dr. Cohen, and he would say to me, 'Linda, are you sure you wouldn't consider being a doctor, because we need a *mind* like yours.' This was tonic to me—here I was, flunking out of grade school! Many years later, I went to see him and said, 'You couldn't do anything for me, but you gave me other things—you *saw* me.'"

When Lyn Austin first knew Linda Hunt, Hunt told her about how terrible it had been at summer camp, where she was made to play tennis. "We had gym three times a week at school," she says now, "and on those days I would put on my white gym blouse when I got up, so that I would never, never have to take it off. When I got to the gym, I would take off my cardigan, and my skirt, and I would slip the gym tunic over my head."

"Didn't the other girls notice?" I ask.

"I was an *actress*," Linda Hunt says, smiling. "I did it very subtly."

IT is six in the morning, in early May. Linda Hunt has just got into the back seat of an old green Ford station wagon that is taking her out to the "She-Devil" set, across the Hudson, in Piermont, New York. The driver has been dozing outside her door, in the West Village, since five-thirty. This is Hunt's third day of shooting. She has packed as if she were going on a long train ride to a place where there is no telling what the weather will be. In her satchel she has a hat, a cardigan, bananas, and a stash of Dr. Chang's Long Life Herbal Tea, which she informs me was for over four hundred years the treasured secret of Dr. Chang's ancestors.

The driver, Tim, asks if she has heard that the house the car is headed for—the location of the Golden Twilight Rest Home, where Linda Hunt, as Nurse Hooper, first encounters Roseanne Barr, as an orderly, Vesta Rose—is haunted. "They say the father killed the kids himself," he says. "They say the couple who live in the caretaker's cottage hear the children screaming. They see them running down the lawn."

"Yes," Linda says. She lowers her

voice to a rasp. "And there are two huge cement vats on the roof to hold water. Two"—she pauses—"cisterns, and later two neighborhood children drowned in them. That makes *four*."

Off Castle Road—a snaking driveway named for the house at the end—looms a huge, pre-blaze Manderley. The makeup trailer is parked on the sloping lawn, past the caretaker's cottage. Beyond a flagstone piazza, lilacs are shedding blossoms into a half-filled swimming pool. Sitting in one of the makeup trailer's three chairs, Linda Hunt assumes her usual position in front of a mirror: staring into her own eyes.

The makeup man announces, "It's that time again," leans down and hands her a tin of Bag Balm. She paints it on her lips with her finger. After Hunt, combed and powdered, leaves the trailer, he says, "When we've been working late, she'll say, 'Come on back to the city in my car.' You don't expect that." Oliver Stapleton, the movie's director of cinematography, is getting a cup of coffee from an urn set up on the frosty lawn. "Linda is quick to adapt to anything," he says. "She copes with any eventuality."

Linda Hunt's dressing room is up three flights of stairs. Nurse Hooper's white uniform hanging on a hook on the door looks like a ghost. Hunt sits down on a leopard-print bed-cover and says, "I hope I can find a heater. That is, if they're not all packed up and taken to another planet."

Irene Ferrari, the women's wardrobe mistress, dressed in green leather, enters with one of Nurse Hooper's ensembles. Hunt cringes. "Oh, Irene, I don't *want* to. That is the most pitiful outfit you've ever seen. A little blouse that has as much relation to the skirt as—nothing." She turns to me, and adds, "That's the way I used to look—wearing plaids and boring blouses. Maybe *that's* why it's so pathetic."

Irene Ferrari says that she will follow Hunt, who is freezing, around with a down jacket. She fastens a pin that says "HOOPER, LPN" onto the starched bodice of Nurse Hooper's uniform, and then helps Linda out of her own clothes and into Hooper's. Werner Sherer, the hairdresser, arrives and begins to fuss with the nurse's cap.

"Did you read about this theatre troupe, Werner, that travels around Mississippi doing 'Romeo and Juliet'?" Hunt asks. "They've done a play from the Oresteia." Sherer takes the cap off her head and adjusts some bobby pins.

"They go out and talk to the townspeople. They get people who are good at doing things—seamstresses, carpenters. They audition townspeople. This is a theatre troupe that does big classical plays. In this production, the Montagues are white and the Capulets are black."

Sherer replaces the cap and looks at it hopefully. "Isn't that something," he says.

"They go into the *community*."

Sherer gives Hunt the mirror and says, "See, excellent. And it is a hat, so it will keep you warm."

Hunt nods, to see if the cap will stay on. "I think it's terribly courageous," she says.

The upcoming shot will be of Nurse Hooper, from a vantage behind a parapet wall, watching the Golden Twilight Rest Home ladies, goaded by Vesta Rose, play soccer. Everyone on the set is talking about how cold it is. Hunt wears her own sweater to the very last but slips out of it pronto when the camera swings toward her. Looking down at the field, she sets her face into Nurse Hooper's truculent stare, and then she projects over Hooper's features a transforming sequence of hurt, sorrow, and disapproval.

Fifteen minutes later, back in her dressing room, Hunt is reciting over a steaming mug, "Postum with milk and honey, it's like mother's milk." She takes a long drink.

"Does Hooper have a first name?" I ask.

"It never struck me," she says. "I call her Hooper. I have one of those names. My friends call me Hunt, and Hunty. It's a boarding-school characteristic, but characteristic of affection. Linda is not something that means anything, but *Hunt*—that seems absolutely appropriate. I have another name—Phipps—which I was not baptized with. It's from my father's side. There was a deacon, Ebenezer Phipps. I was political for about five months in the sixties, writing letters about gun control to senators and so on, and I thought that if my letters were simply signed Linda Hunt they'd be consigned to the trash heap. So I signed myself L. Phipps Hunt. And then at Good-



man, when I thought I was going to be a director, I used it again. But I love playing people like Hooper, who starts off being nobody and in the course of the film finds out she's somebody. She's an epic character. After I had my fifteen minutes of whatever it is—I won the Academy Award, and I wore a two-thousand-dollar dress, and the next day the dress was in the corner—I got scared and I thought, I will have to be myself, because they think I'm somebody I'm *not*. On the street, people would come up to me—they still do—and say, 'I'm thrilled, I'm *thrilled*.'" She mimics a lunatic's wringing hands and then closes them around her own neck. "They want to kill me. 'Aren't you *thrilled*?' they say. But sometimes it's incredible—a connection you made years ago, and you didn't know about it, because the person was out there in the dark theatre. I'm always amazed by people's illusions—if they're not my own." Hunt laughs, her stockinged feet propped on a dressing-room heater that a production assistant has unearthed and brought upstairs.

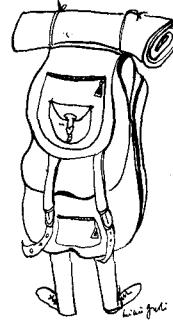
WHEN Linda Hunt was growing up in Westport, there was a children's theatre in town called the Silver Nutmeg, which was run, very successfully, by a woman named Clare Oleson. Marcia Hunt joined when she was about ten, and Linda, at age four or five, went to see her in productions. One of the plays was "Little Women," which Miss Oleson put on in the auditorium of the elementary school, with Mariette Hartley, then twelve, as Jo. "I remember that it was whispered around that there were *agents from New York* to see Mariette," Hunt says during another break in the shooting. "What did I know about agents from New York? I was seven years old. But it sounded very impressive. I was struck—stunned—by Mariette. I remember the scene when Jo cuts her hair: you saw her go out of the house having made this decision, and she comes back with her hair shorn off. It was a badge of courage. She walks out the door and comes back a different person. She was a heroine to me. I can't remember a time before that when the word 'heroine' had made any impression on me or I had had any use for it. But here was a complete stranger, a character who doesn't exist, impersonated by a complete stranger, just a girl who goes to school in Weston, who makes this huge

leap. And I fell in love with Mariette. I fell in love with the possibilities the stage holds, and with enormous things happening to people and people rising to them, and people finding places in themselves that they didn't know were there, that weren't ordinary but extraordinary. I was so clearly in the world of those sisters and that home. I reached the age of six without seeing television, and I feel very lucky to have been in a world like that for the first years of my life. But there were other heroics at the Silver Nutmeg Theatre. Playing the title role in 'Aladdin' was a boy who couldn't remember his lines. It was typical of Clare that she would give this boy the part—he had something. He was onstage most of the time with a girl who had learned his part as well as her own. I knew that because my sister had told me—she was one of the genies. The girl fed him his lines like a pro. It was thrilling. I was right there, suspended in the audience, in a state of high anxiety. It is the most powerful thing when something goes wrong onstage. That boy had a dependency—he had to *listen* to that girl. Because of that, he had to be alive every moment he was onstage. My first foray into the Silver Nutmeg Theatre, at age five, was a disaster. There was an incident when one of the kids greeted me at the door by hitting me in the stomach, and that just about finished me off."

"Was it Jo, though, that fixed the idea of becoming an actress in your mind?" I ask.

"No, it was a few years later, when I was taken to see Mary Martin in 'Peter Pan.' For me, there was no confusion—there was no 'Isn't that a woman?' When my mother asked me whom I had liked best, I said, 'Mary Martin.' I completely understood from the very beginning that these were *actors*, doing something extraordinary. I think that what happens when people are deeply moved by a theatrical experience is that they are deeply affected by an actor's effort to make a leap toward a relationship with a character which is visionary, because it exists only in the mind. That's why I like Brecht. When you play Brecht well—and Joe Chaikin, of the Open Theatre, says this beautifully—the actor always exists onstage. You see the back wall of the theatre, the lights—a theatre without illusion. You

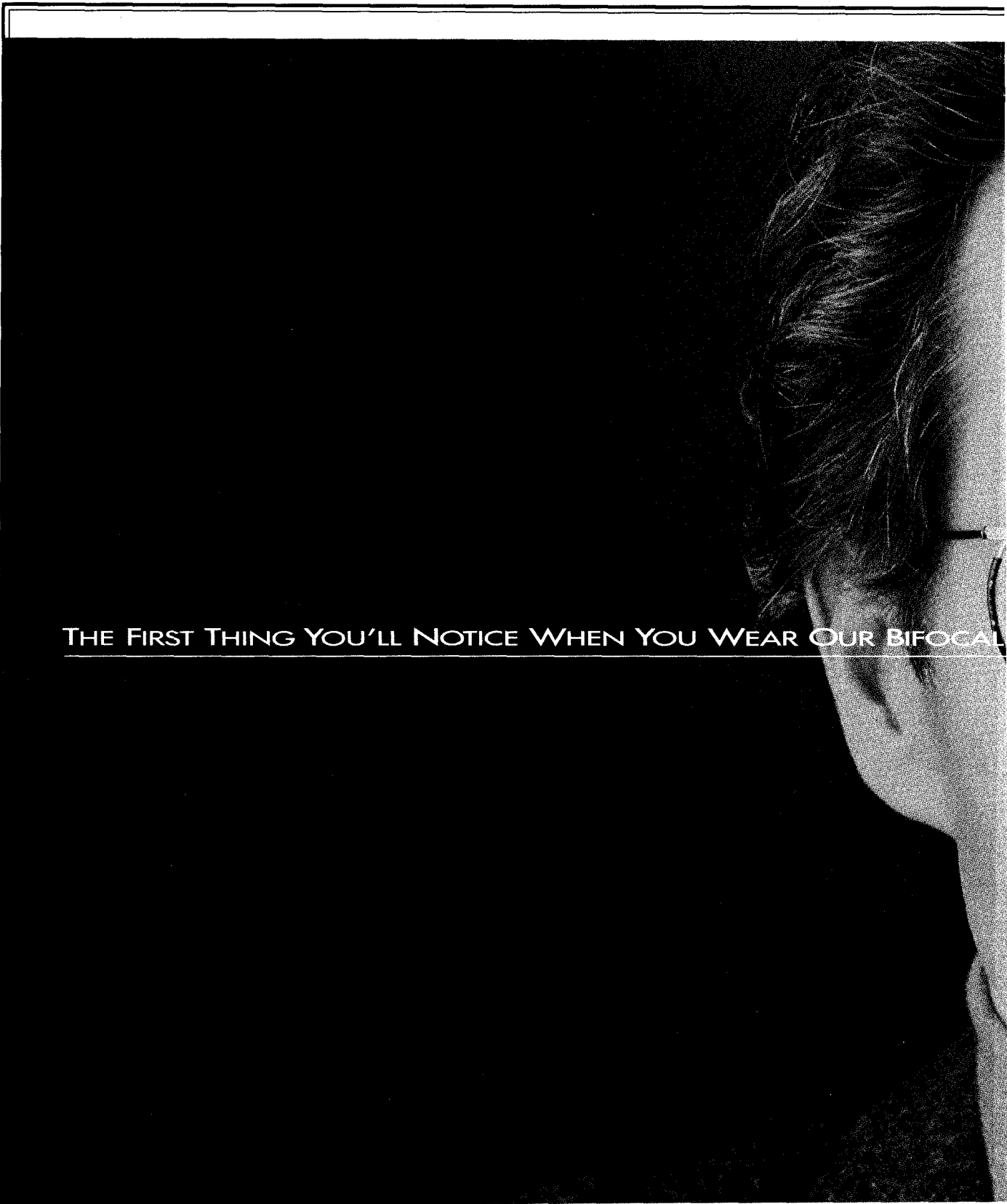
see the mechanics of the actor, not in a technical way but in a spiritual way. Not *I am Mother Courage* but *I am Linda Hunt*." Hunt lifts her hands and faces the palms toward each other, like shadow puppets. "It's unlike Stanislavsky, or the Method, where the actor supposedly enters a place of four walls, not three, and the actor *becomes* the character. That's boring to me. It's limiting, too, and it's a lie, because that's not what happens. I don't become Mother Courage. I'm me, I'm al-



ways me. I felt like a basset pup trying to grow these big ears and paws to grow into Courage! But I think of the great actors who espouse the Strasberg method—Brando and Geraldine Page, to pick the great ones. In 'Streetcar,' that's *not* what Brando is doing. Alchemy of the self is what he's doing. He's Brando, but he's allowing himself to

be transformed. And what moves us is his willingness to believe—the emotional, spiritual movement of an actor who is reaching, around the corner, into himself, and who reaches something that isn't illuminated. That's such a humiliating thing to do, and you do it in front of an audience. The exhilaration of the audience responding to the actor is what allows this to happen."

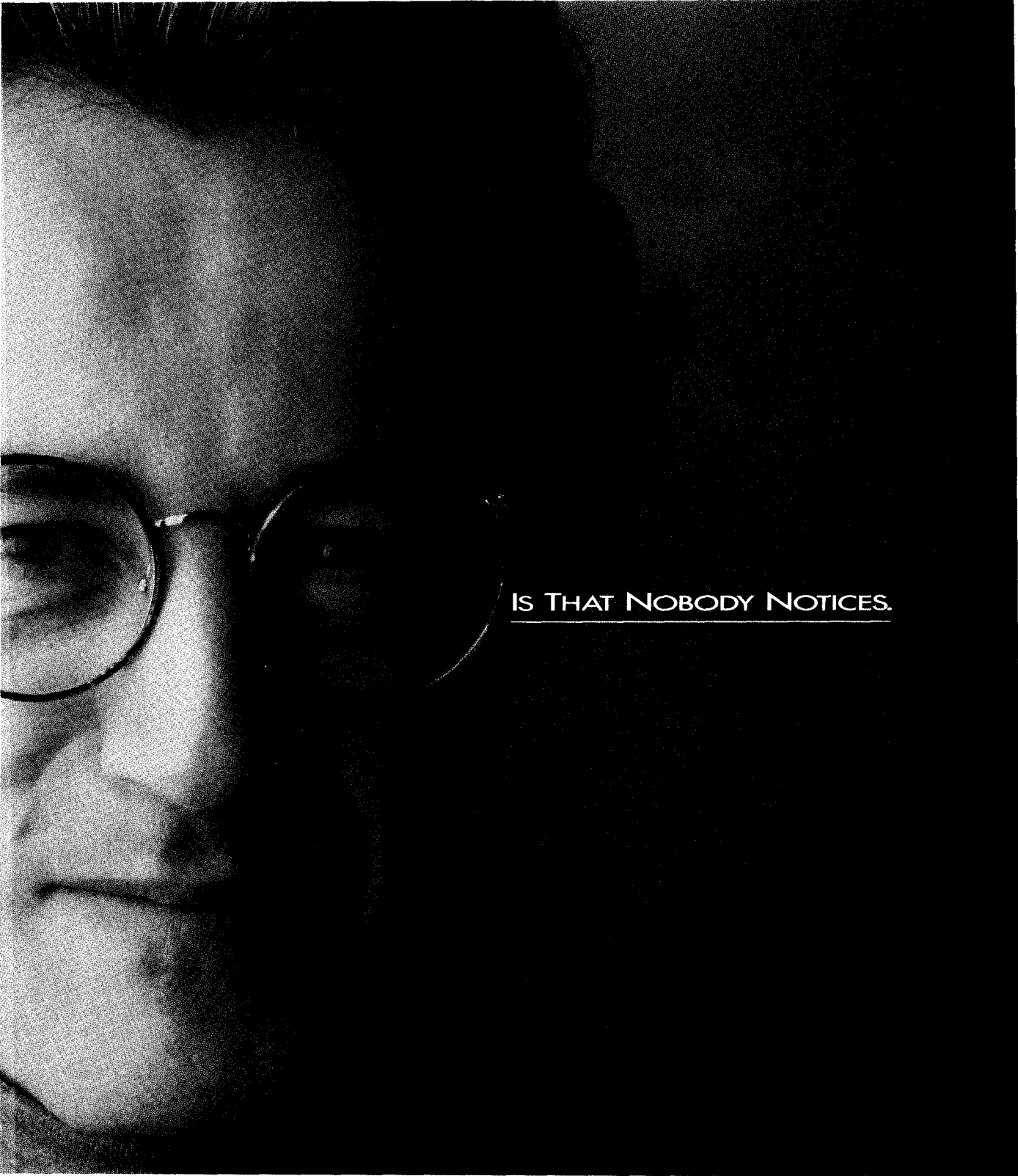
When Linda Hunt was twelve years old, the Silver Nutmeg Theatre held a summer session for older children at the White Barn, Lucille Lortel's theatre, in Westport. The children's play was to be called "Flibbertigibbet," and Clare Oleson asked the children to write out their parts on sheets of newsprint. Anything that felt like school still troubled Linda Hunt, and though she had been happy at the prospect of being in a real play, she couldn't keep up with writing her part. She wound up in "Flibbertigibbet" anyway—in a small part, with no lines. She had to be pushed onto the stage. That fall, Clare Oleson was getting ready to move to Italy to make hats, and when she called Mrs. Hunt to ask if Linda would be in her last productions Linda had her mother make up an excuse about schoolwork. Soon afterward, though, Mrs. Hunt heard of a woman in Fairfield named Beth McEvers. Linda began to study with her every Friday after school. "It didn't have anything to do with Method acting," Hunt



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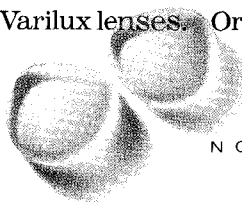
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says. "She taught the tail end of elocution, tempered only slightly with something more modern. But we did *poetry*, and we would make up monologues. Every afternoon, I stood in the living room and did my exercises religiously—vowel sounds, consonants, how to hold the tongue in the mouth. Field's 'Little Boy Blue' was my first piece. It's nothing great, but I thought it was heaven. I had my usual inhibitions, but I worked through them, because I wanted so badly to take from her everything she knew—it made me worry less about making an ass out of myself."

EARLY in the evening, thirty-odd years later, Linda Hunt, Roseanne Barr, and Geraldine Barr, Roseanne's sister, are sitting in the green Ford station wagon behind a gas station on Route 9W, in Palisades, New York. The heat in the car is turned up, and dusk is coming on. The local police are stopping traffic on the road in both directions while the crew sets up a shot in which Nurse Hooper will chase after Vesta Rose to join her on a commuter bus for New York City. Geraldine Barr, sitting in the front passenger seat hums idly, "You're every woman in the world, to me."

"What I want to know is, am I every woman in the world to *you*?" Hunt says from the back seat. She is wearing a down parka over Nurse Hooper's vile going-away outfit. "You've got some sister there, Ro."

Roseanne Barr, squinting at a copy of the *National Enquirer* in her lap, says, "She's a genius." Geraldine Barr has seen "Waiting for the Moon," in which Hunt plays Alice B. Toklas, fourteen times.

Roseanne Barr calls Linda "Princess Queen Hunt." She lifts up the paper and holds it aloft, like someone using it to ward off rain. "You could be Socrates and read this stuff, and suddenly your mind would just deteriorate," she says. "At least, my headline doesn't say 'ROSEANNE DROWNED IN A VAT OF BROWN GOO.'"

Hunt says, "I'm really glad to be out of that house."

A few minutes go by. Hunt, now out of the Ford, sits in a director's chair with her name on it. Susan Seidelman, in a leather jacket, comes up and explains, "We're doing everything in reverse order: you're out of breath, because you've just been running."

Hunt nods. A neon sign—"INDIAN

MOTORCYCLES"—reddens over the pumps. Before the shot, a makeup man arrives with two Dixie cups and two toothbrushes, one yellow, one pink.

"Is the other one Roseanne's?" Hunt asks. "How touching." She brushes her teeth and spits into the grass.

That night, riding back to Manhattan in the car, Hunt says to me, "Find the private solitude on a public stage. That's what an old acting teacher of mine, Bobby Lewis, used to say. What can be taught in class is how to make choices, to make connections. Style as a result of behavior is what you want—not the other way around. You see a little boy walking a dog, and you remember him. That's 'inspiration.' Interpretation can't be taught."

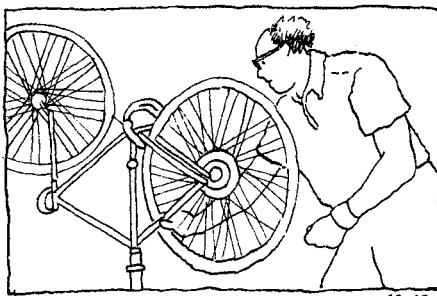
IN 1964, Linda Hunt went straight from the Interlochen Arts Academy, in Michigan, which is a boarding school for students interested in the performing arts, to the Goodman School of Drama, in Chicago. She didn't go to college. After two years at the Goodman, she left school and came to New York. Her father said that he would pay her expenses for two years, and call it "college," while she tried to break into the theatre, and that paid for her first small apartment, on East Seventy-third Street, and modest expenses. She stayed in New York for three years, and then she went home to Westport. "I was like a fighter coming out of the ring," Hunt says. "I stopped doing the pitiful variety of non-jobs I was doing in the city. I'd done non-Equity summer stock, and that last year I was a director at the St. Bartholomew Community Club Playhouse. But by then Bambi Linn, who used to dance with Sid Caesar, had bought an old clapboard house in Westport and made it into a studio. Bobby Lewis was teaching there, and I took class. The second night, Bobby said to me 'Do you work?' and I just stuttered—*blip blip blip*. I didn't even know what he meant. He said, 'As an actor.' I said, 'No,' and he

said, 'You must.' That summer was a watershed for me."

Robert Lewis, who was, with Lee Strasberg and Stella Adler, one of the founding members of the Group Theatre, says of his time in the Westport studio, "Along came this girl, and she explained to me that because of her physical limitations she was having such a hard time getting cast that she was going to give it up. She just wanted to see if she could recapture her love of the theatre. Jean Arthur was in that class, too. She had a problem with stage fright, and she wanted to see if she could overcome *that*. Linda was spectacular in class. I looked at her and saw an actor. A play says 'Enter Rose, blond, pretty,' but if you cast someone for that description you may be in trouble, because in the next scene Rose may have to kill her mother, and the pretty girl you've cast may not have the wit, the imagination, the *humor* to kill her mother. Someday they'll call Linda for a six-foot policeman."

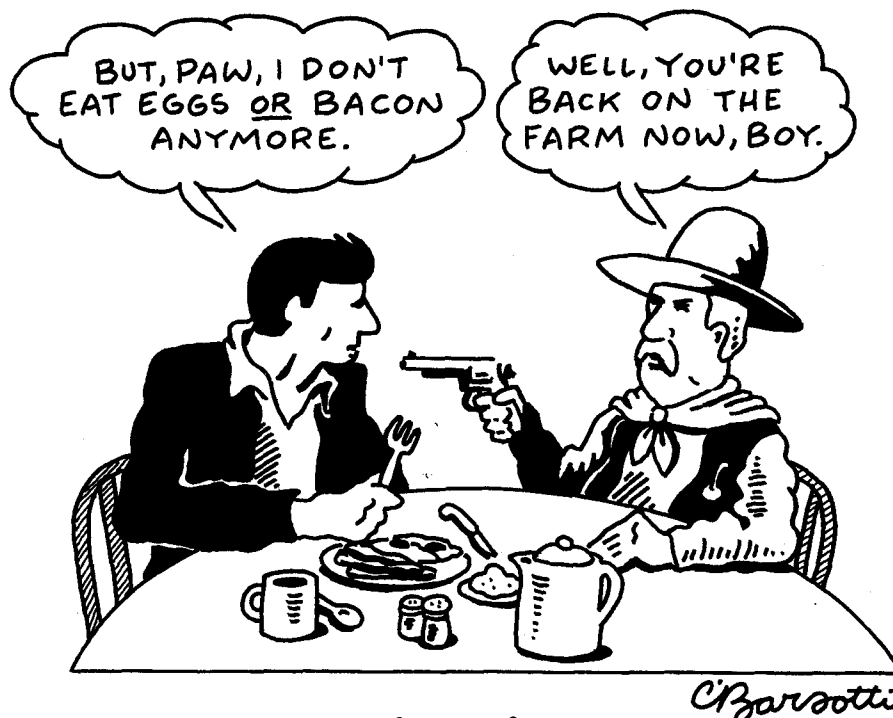
By the middle of that summer with Lewis, Linda Hunt decided that she was going to be an actress and stop pretending that she wanted to be a director. A year later, her determination resulted in the beginning of her association with the Long Wharf Theatre, in New Haven, which continued through the seventies. She started to do things she hadn't felt able to do before, among them a one-woman show of selections from literature about Joan of Arc. (One was Voltaire's "La Pucelle," in which Joan rejects the advances of a lovelorn donkey.) In the winter of 1971, Hunt played Lucianus in Arvin Brown's production of "Hamlet," and the following summer, in Central Park, she was the Player Queen.

To Austin Pendleton she was the most exciting person he'd ever seen in that part, and on the strength of that performance he cast her the following year as the old woman in Strindberg's "The Dance of Death," which he was directing as part of a double bill, with "Miss Julie," at the Long Wharf. Hunt's part is about half a page: the old woman appears only once, when a door blows open, and she is standing outside. Again, Pendleton says, Hunt contributed all out of proportion to her role. "The most riveting actors are the ones who come on, and the audience knows they have a story to tell," he says. "Ralph Richardson had it, Al Pacino



has it, John Malkovich has it in spades, and it gets played out in any number of roles. These people have a particular set of conflicting energies which has resulted in their becoming actors and being onstage. The story is like a piece of hot metal—it can be shaped in many ways. The audience forgets and doesn't forget at the same time. When the old woman appeared, it had to be spooky—you had to feel that something *important* had happened. When I first knew Linda, she was this transparently brilliant actor who was being typed out. When you're great, as Linda has to know she is, you do one of two things when you're being turned away from every casting office before you even open your mouth. You either say 'Well, they're right' or you *form an opinion* of that kind of behavior, until a visionary like Peter Weir comes along. There's something about Linda that's profoundly unashamed, and I have a theory that people who have that quality have known shame. During that time when she was unable to get work, and was scorned, she formed an opinion of good behavior and bad behavior. She brings that black-or-white quality onto the stage with her, and it's vivid and hot. Yes, she's cast in those judgmental roles, but she also brings out the moral aspect of those parts in her work. She needed that ground. I thought Aunt Dan was a beautiful inversion. With some actors the audience encounters a series of canal locks, but with Linda you know you're seeing the raw material of where she's coming from. People have to keep figuring out how to use her."

Linda Hunt was Lucianus again at the Mark Taper Forum in the winter of 1973, but by the end of the next summer she again felt at a loss. Then Arvin Brown offered her a part in Eugene O'Neill's "Ah, Wilderness!" at the Long Wharf—Norah, the Irish maid, who in the course of the two-hour play speaks less than twenty lines. Hunt says that Norah appeared in her life like a miracle, because she was desperate. The play was invited to the Circle in the Square uptown. It was her first top-flight job in New York. Hunt had thought about leaving Westport and returning to the city, but she was broke; she had decided that she would move when she had some money. When Arvin Brown called, she said to herself, *That's it*. "I needed to come back to New York as an actress," Hunt



says, "and Arvin was the impetus that made that ball go forward."

Arvin Brown remembers that Hunt played the countrified Norah with great charm. "It's the intelligent actors who play fools the best," he says. "But what impressed me most was that, as with a few other actors at the early stages of their careers—Meryl Streep, for instance—Linda had a sense of her own destiny. I would imagine that she makes acquaintances on each project, and is adored by everyone, but that it's hard for her to form intimate relationships. And I think some of the great roles for Linda have not been written yet, because the time of the truly independent, spirited woman is just coming on now—the woman who doesn't have to suffer for her place in the world. Linda has, I would say, a 'Let's get on with it' quality."

BY the middle of June, the "She-Devil" set has moved to an address in lower Manhattan, on Old Slip. On the door of Linda Hunt's Winnebago a production assistant has taped a hand-lettered sign that reads "HOOPER OF THE MOUNTIES." It is four o'clock, and Hunt has been on the set since seven in the morning. Inside the Winnebago, the air-conditioner is on. Hunt, sitting at a Formica-topped table, is humming, "Lips like pips and oh, those hips, but no more conscience than a snake has." She looks around the trailer and says, "This is not the upgrade of Hooper." She eats half a

Hershey's bar, and neatly folds the wrapper over the rest. "I sang, of course, in 'Mother Courage,' and in a play by Tim Mayer, who died last year, called 'Red Eye,'" she says. "I used to go and see them—musicals—and weep at the end. I wanted to *leap* on the stage, into that life. In 1974, Geraldine Fitzgerald was doing an act of street songs at the Long Wharf, and one night she invited me to join her, because I was doing another musical there, 'The Knight of the Burning Pestle.' Brooks Jones had written me a wonderful, heart-stopping song, and Geraldine asked me to sing it. It's way back in my head." Hunt leans forward on her elbows on the table with a look of pure delight and sings:

Better whistle a tune
For the man in the moon.
The boys all told me
Da da de de dee,
There's no hurry
For a man . . .

"*That's* a good beginning. So, yes, I've done musicals in my day. When I do 'Mother Courage' again, I'd like to study singing. It's a very particular kind of kick—it's like a soliloquy—singing onstage, because usually the song is directed at the audience, and it pulls you up out of time and space. But the way the breath moves through the body and the way the syllables are held on to is incredibly exhilarating."

A pause, during which Hunt drums her fingers on the table. Then she says, "I've been watching the camera to-

day. Sometimes the camera needs to be coming in like an ear or an eye, through a crack. The camera has a life of its own. It's observing differently at different times. 'The Year of Living Dangerously' was made before I knew what the camera was seeing. I didn't know about lenses, or when they were doing a master shot of the scene. You can create a focus for yourself, but if you don't know where the bull's-eye is it's like sending an arrow into space. Peter began to have me come up and look through the lens at the setup before we started. He did his job the way Fred Astaire danced. On subsequent films I've asked to go up and look. I *listen* now to the conversations about lenses and framing. And when they're dollying I have a pretty good idea when I'll be coming into focus. But the *camera* is the key. It doesn't enter until everything is ready. I nearly died today when I saw them wiping the track so that the camera ride will be absolutely *smooth*. With paper towels, like picking the lint off a sweater. In both theatre and film, an intense intimacy builds up. You fall in love with people. I find myself saying again and

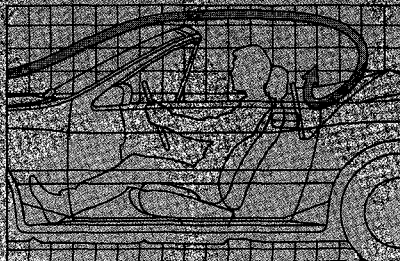
again, 'I love this person,' 'I love her hair,' 'I love his laugh.' It's because you're working on something together, creating something, and you're looking for these things to love, to adore. In the theatre, you have to create it constantly, every night, and there's an important moment when the piece comes to belong to the actors, rather than to the director or the writer. The degree to which it happens determines the success of the play. Sometimes the director has infantilized the actors, or intimidated them so much that they can't take it where they *must* take it. There's many a story about *that*. In a film, though, right away the thing is in the can—in the hands of the director, the editor, the producer—and what you end up with may be very different from what you yourself thought you were creating. And, of course, during the filming there are five setups for every scene, and before each one there's a wait, and then you are sent to your trailer, or wherever, and they say, 'Is there anything we can get you?' "

By half past ten in the evening, it looks from the schedule as if shooting could go on for some hours more.

Karen Klein, who lives with Hunt, has come down to the set to keep her company. The location is an old warehouse that will be converted into a health club when the film is finished. The top floor, where the crew is gathered, has gaping holes in the walls and is reached by four steep, badly lit flights of stairs. Each landing is equipped with a litter box of rat poison. During the afternoon, some of the actors were fetched out of the fourth-floor window by a cherry picker. Hunt stands in the narrow aisle of the lukewarm Winnebago and relates this and other events of the day to Karen Klein. She finishes with "I'm a theatre actress. I have to do it again and again. In movies, they're trying to get a master and they just *freeze* the fumbling, so that it isn't fumbling anymore. The truth of any moment is what is happening to an actor. Today, they were up there saying, 'Quiet, this is an emotional scene.' I don't understand that kind of talk. *Every* scene is an emotional scene. I don't get what people are talking about. So, some actors know when they're going to cry. Well, that's Greek to me. They're directing themselves, then. I

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remember that Geraldine Fitzgerald once said to me, 'Linda, the very first thing you should do when you get a script is have someone else cross out all the stage directions, so that you won't know what they are.' Shakespeare said 'Exeunt' and 'Enter.' That was *it*. It's absurd to need an actress to cry so much that you put glycerine in her eyes. *Honestly*. It's just not *on* to ask me what I'm going to do."

HUNT first met Martha Clarke, the dancer and a founder of the Pilobolus company, in 1974, when Brooks Jones, who was directing "L'Histoire du Soldat," asked Clarke if she would choreograph the play. From then until the early eighties, Martha Clarke and Linda Hunt worked together: on "Portraits" (1976), in which they also performed together; "Elizabeth Dead" (1980); and "Metamorphosis in Miniature" (1982), for which Hunt won her first Obie. "She is so *slow*," Clarke says. "So *deliberate*. You know how she washes a dish? Or shells peas? Or when she takes off a sweater she folds it so carefully into a little packet?" She

mimes each of these activities with excruciating slowness, then laughs. "When we were younger, I was her subject," she says. "Now it's more like 'Queenie, move your ass!' I went to see her do an evening of Emily Dickinson, and she just walked onstage in that deliberate way of hers. And she didn't say, 'This is a program of Emily Dickinson.' She didn't introduce herself. Oh, no. Back to our Princess!" Of that evening Hunt says, "It was like splitting open a vein. I wouldn't read the poems like that again. But I would read them better!"

"Linda, as you know, does not look like every Tom, Dick, and Harry," says Clarke, who is currently at work on a production that involves circus animals. "Before she was famous, people looked at her on the street. There were years when it seemed as if the only opportunities for Linda were in experimental theatre, and I think she's putting off being identified with it now. Of course, she will have nothing to do with the circus—no way. She has always been very private. She wants to make sure that she isn't doing something because she's influenced by

someone else. She's very happy now. There's a phrase she used with me often: 'I live my life baby step by baby step.' Not even full step. She knows her parameters."

FOR five years, Linda Hunt owned a small seventeenth-century farmhouse nestled on a ledge of a hill in Kent, Connecticut. By late August of 1989, the house was for sale. The garden had grown over. You entered through a Dutch door into a front room dominated by a large fireplace. Among the ornaments on the mantel was a nineteenth-century faience clock face with no hands, and facing the fireplace was an outsize sofa upholstered in houndstooth linen. "Someone ordered it at Bloomingdale's and abandoned it, and I got it for just *zip*," Hunt said. She was dressed in a summer variant of her usual practical clothes: khaki pants, and an oxford shirt with the sleeves rolled up. "In 1985, my father died, I turned forty, I started rehearsals for 'Aunt Dan' at the Royal Court, and I bought a house. It's enough to lay one low for a year."

She looked around the pretty room,

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and said, "I am of two minds about this house. It's enough to make me commit hara-kiri." The sign-in book for the real-estate agent was on a Parson's table at one end of the room. "I think the longest time I've ever been alone here was right after 'Aunt Dan and Lemon' closed. I had never understood the early spring before, the way the gray fades into purple, and then blushes." She paused. "Spring embarrasses me. It lacks restraint. I didn't do any gardening, because I was going to Paris to do 'Waiting for the Moon.'" Cupping one hand and stroking with the other, she peered at an imaginary flower, then shook it away. She rubbed her hands together. "But what I found out was that I had put down roots in New York. When I first moved back to the city, I remember looking for the longest time into lighted apartments, thinking, My God, people have lives here! They have children, who have childhoods here!" She grinned. "As a perpetually shocking observation, this ceased. But now Tenth Street—that's one of the most beautiful streets in the world. I could open up my window and hear someone playing a rinky-dink piano. I've always loved the ritual of companionship. In a rural area, you have to invent your own life. I'm desolate."

I asked Hunt if she ever forgets her lines onstage.

"In 'Top Girls,' I started to experience what actors call 'going up'—which means getting lost onstage, and which manifests itself in forgetting your lines, and then in the fear that you will," she said, and paused. (In the first act of "Top Girls," Linda Hunt played Joan, the ninth-century Pope who, after giving birth in the street, was stoned to death; and, in the second act, Louise, a twentieth-century office worker. The play is, loosely, about the lives of women in history.) "When Max came to the U.S. to cast the American company of 'Top Girls,' I was on the list the people at the Public Theatre said he should see," she went on. "I already knew Max, because in the early seventies he had directed me in 'Trelawney of the Wells' at the Long Wharf, and I always remembered him, because he said to me, 'I just want to thank you for this play, you were wonderful, and you did it without any help from me.' And that was true. I was *thrilled* to see him. He asked me what part in the play I'd like to do. I

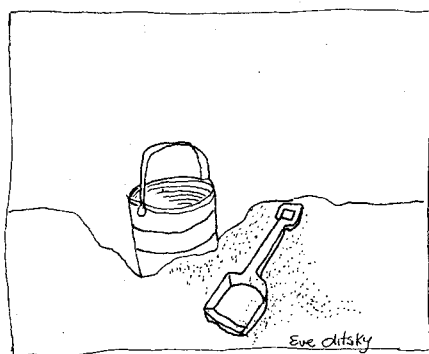
read for Pope Joan, and it was one of the best readings I've ever had. It was sheer delight. It read as if it had been written for me—there was no groping in the dark. I don't know if Max had me read for Louise then or later. It was like years ago when I went to auditions at the Old Globe, in San Diego, for 'Twelfth Night,' and read for Feste, and a woman I knew asked me why I didn't read for Maria. It was the same thing for 'Top Girls.' I never even thought of Louise. Not only is she a darker character than Joan but she's being *interviewed*—she has lost her mother, she has lost her job. Anyway, there I was, working out of my own vulnerability and frailty rather than out of the robustness of Joan, so when I would experience that insecurity onstage those were scary moments. Austin Pendleton says that an actor goes up in a moment of deepest belief, when he is most deeply playing a scene, as if there were a kind of blockage that occurs. The actor remembers *himself*, is *distracted* by himself, and forgets his lines. I think there's a lot of truth in that, but the next question is: What has *happened* that allows the actor to succumb so deeply that this sensation of loss occurs?

"I remember when I started 'Top Girls' and 'The Year of Living Dangerously' came out, I was giving interviews up the wazoo, and there was all this newness in my life. Peter and Sigourney were going to Cannes, and I desperately wanted to go with them, and I was starting to go up onstage. I think it's an experience of short-circuiting. Your life erupts onstage—it can't be put in its proper place, so that the chosen life can be played for two hours. Your life is *always* still going on, but usually the role is like a camera's field of focus—it's what the audience is seeing. Sometimes you're not at all conscious of it, but what's going on in your life comes through like some-

thing bleeding through gauze. Sometimes in 'Mother Courage' I would just say to myself, 'Linda, think red. Everything that is red on this stage will give you energy.' And sometimes I would lose myself and I would go up. But it wasn't like Louise. I would say, 'It doesn't matter, *skip* some of the lines. Pick up the wagon. *Pull* the wagon. Just do what you have to do to keep breathing. Keep singing, keep moving.' It was always an adventure."

In "Aunt Dan and Lemon," Hunt had speeches that lasted twenty minutes, and fear of losing her lines escalated into her first experience of profound stage fright. In the winter of 1984, Wallace Shawn, the author, had come backstage to see her after a performance of "Mother Courage." He said he hoped she wasn't so successful that she was going to be out of his reach. They met again at the Gran Caffé, on Greenwich Avenue, in the spring, and he handed her a manila envelope, Hunt says, and told her that that was what he'd been doing with his life, that it was for her, and that it was his great desire that she play it. "I was dumbstruck," Hunt says. "I thought I was the luckiest person in the world. I was overwhelmed, and perplexed. There was never any question about whether I would do it, even before I read it. That's how I feel about Wally."

"Aunt Dan and Lemon" was produced in 1985—after Hunt had fulfilled her obligations to the movies—first at the Royal Court and then at the Public Theatre, both times under Max Stafford-Clark's direction. The cast remained the same, and included the author in the role of Lemon's father. "Not only was Linda playing Aunt Dan not incongruous," Stafford-Clark says. "It was congruous. She was playing this very forceful, very charismatic character. She was terrific. In rehearsal I work in a fairly analytic way, and she responds to that very fully. It gives a map that the actors can refer to during the play. For example, if there were one word in 'Top Girls' to describe Louise, it would be 'embittered,' and I think that may be something Linda has spent a lot of time trying not to be. But in the theatre Linda is now a rather powerful person. I, for one, would stand behind any choices she made. And the work she chooses for herself is important. I can't think of any roles that Linda *couldn't* play. She could play Beatrice,



she could play the Fool in 'Lear'—these are roles we have discussed. I know that Linda probably thinks her physical stature is limiting—most actors like to think they have an unlimited range, but they don't—but she'd be, for instance, a very good Richard III. I think her range is remarkable. Of course, I think she is *suited* to a certain kind of role, but all actors are."

DURING part of last fall, Linda Hunt was ill, and I didn't see her for a while. In January, on an evening of absolute downpour, she and I are to have dinner, and, drenched, I stand ringing the bell on her stoop for an unsettling length of time. Lights shine behind the iron grilles of the windows of a school across the street. Suddenly, Linda Hunt, looking intent, opens the front door. "You thought you'd be left out in the rain like a drowned cat," she says. "Oh, no." As usual, she picks up on any vestige of personal uneasiness, and it's impossible for me to say, as I might with someone else, "I only just got here." We climb a white staircase, past a hall bench painted with a trompe-l'oeil top hat and gloves. In her apartment, the faience clock with no hands looks odder than it did in the house in Kent, which has been sold.

On a white mantel in the bedroom, next to a New Year's card of a woman holding a bird, is a framed black-and-white photograph of Hunt's father asleep in a hammock in her Aunt Ruth's garden. "That's where he still is for me now," she says. "In that hammock, asleep."

Across from the clock in the living room, on a small round table with a lace cover protected by a practical circle of thick glass, is a pile of "Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle" books. Next week, Linda Hunt is flying out to Los Angeles, and she is taking along these books, which she bought over Christmas to introduce to Karen Klein's niece; she sees herself now as Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle instead of as the little girl who needs to have her table manners corrected. "I see myself swooping down," she says. "And just think of the great set—an upside-down house!"

Since her recent illness, Hunt says, she has taken up the Alexander Technique, and is bemused by it. "It's the kind of thing that's very simple and very natural, and therefore very complex. In the beginning, I would just lie in bed, and my instructor would just put



"I remember the Second World War. That's the one that kind of flickers on the screen, right?"

her hands under my back, and I'd feel these small, small releases. At the start, it's like the emperor's new clothes. You don't feel anything. I kept saying—"she shakes her fists—"You mean I don't have to *do* anything?" Alexander, who was an actor, was trying to figure out why he lost his voice every night onstage. He became his own experiment. The horrendous thing is that we are conditioned *very early*, as infants, to move in ways that have nothing to do with how the body really works, because of ideas about how men are to move and how women are to move. When you're an infant, people are always at you to crawl when you're not ready to crawl. Imagine—she shows you that you have *no shoulders*. You have arms and a collarbone, but 'shoulders' don't exist. Your body is perpetually leaving its impression on you."

Hunt takes a sip of water, and says, "I saw Daniel Day-Lewis in 'My Left Foot' the other night, and I loved the movie, I was completely engaged in it. The film is brilliant when it's a story of a family. Through following that family you learn about the Day-Lewis character. But there were certain points when I thought, Oh no, we're doing 'The Miracle Worker' again. That is, in a story about someone who overcomes a large physical disability it really is, I think, a question of emphasis. I think when you're telling the story of a really extraordinary person maybe it's better not to tell it entirely through the

eyes of the character himself. The mechanism is too delicate. But how do you express the turbulent emotion of someone who is silent?" She pauses. "Often, when I think, 'I'm in a pit, I'll never get out of it,' the answer is something technical."

On top of a triangular pine cupboard in a corner is a red-painted miniature wooden temple from Bali, a gift from an old friend. The eaves are elaborately curved and point upward. "Traditionally, it's kept outside, to welcome the spirit world," Hunt says.

"It looks like a birdhouse," I hazard.

"Well, if you were a bird," she says, grinning, "could you resist?"

The apartment has four rooms, three of them large, and it gleams with the precise tidiness that comes with concentrated effort.

"There were years that I thought I liked cleaning," Hunt says. "And then I said to myself, 'Come on, honey, you hate this.' So then I did it for years, knowing I hated it. *That* was torture. And now I don't do it. I *pay* someone to do it."

It is seven o'clock, and Linda Hunt decides that we are hungry. We put our raincoats on for a walk around the corner. "You remember my umbrella and I'll remember yours," she says, with "Looking-Glass" logic, as we make our way downstairs.

In a minute, we are seated in a French restaurant at the intersection of Sixth Avenue and King Street. Hunt,

The small island of Dominica vs. "progress."

A person could embark, exactly like a wine connoisseur, upon a review of the "top notes" and the "finishes" of perfumes, after-shaves, colognes, skin bracers, arriving finally at the not uninteresting subject of pheromones, or human sexual attractants.

Relax. I do not intend to do so.

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settled under the banquette mirror with a Dry Sack, asks, "How would you give direction about a character who's happy that she's happy?" We have been talking about an actress who seems that way.

"Act relieved?" I say.

She gestures in the direction of four people sitting in the middle of the room. "Did you see *that*?" she asks. I glance in the mirror. An elderly woman has put her hand on the side of her companion's neck.

"Fingernails?" I ask, missing the point completely.

"No," Hunt says. "There was no acknowledgment of her hand there, but he was like a great animal, calmed. Total familiarity. That's a hand that has rested on that neck for fifty years. That's their son with them." She pauses, considering. "And that's their daughter-in-law. I'm reading the Greeks again. People do have private symbols. I think everything about me goes into my hands. I remember I got to a point where I took off all my rings, so that my hands would be neutral."

I ask what she feels she needs from an audience.

"Understanding," she says.

"Many actors would say love," I say.

"No, I don't think so." She pauses.

"Understanding. The dream is always of a collaboration that is perfectly balanced. I need to act in tandem."

"Do you know why you make the powerful impression that you do, on the stage and in films?" I ask.

"That is a key question," Hunt says.

"It is because it is between me and them. I act for the audience. It is a primary relationship. For me, no matter what the material, that relationship exists. I don't like playing kitchen drama. I don't like the theatre of realism, particularly. But the audience is *why* I act—whether that audience is a theatre with three walls, or the camera, or *you*. I think most of my life I have thought of myself as a solitary figure. Over and over again, I express that solitariness onstage and on film—over and over again. I want to see myself as solitary in the landscape. It's the story I tell. And I think I've worked out of that for forty-five years, and I don't need to tell that story anymore. The only truth I've allowed people to see is very limited. But it's been a source of great strength. It's where my gifts, such as they are, lie. I remember when I first met Nicole David, my agent, she said,

'If you stay here in Los Angeles, you'll have to do a lot of television.' And she asked me whether I had a picture of myself as I would be cast in television. And I, naïve, just shook my head. She said, 'You would play schoolteachers, and nurses, and maybe career women. You would play unattached women.' I swallowed a great lump in my throat. And it's a myth that I swallowed—that my difference was so great that it was entirely separating and alienating. And I've nurtured it, that difference, but I just feel I'm pushing against a wall at the moment. There's no completion in anything I've done. The twin self has been living without its twin. I feel just on the cusp of this. I've been able to feel this only lately, because I've had enough work only in the past five years or so to feel it deeply. I think I started to feel it as soon as 'The Year of Living Dangerously' appeared, because Billy Kwan epitomizes this particular use of myself. And this may be the last breath of clarity that's coming out of that. People have asked why I haven't been confronted with more choices, and I think it's because they have to exist for *me*. I have to see the possibility of those choices before anyone else can see them. I have to be able to see over the wall."

Linda Hunt pauses, and then mentions an actress who was an idol of hers. "But then I noticed that her work got sloppy," she says. "All the specific power of her work had just washed away. I don't know what this would mean for me. I sense the other side of the wall. I can only sense the necessity of it."

A trio of students, the last people left at the bar, notice Hunt and nudge each other. She has eaten only half her salmon, and the waiter, after clearing the table, returns it to her beautifully wrapped. The foil has been turned into a bird.

"That will be hard to unwrap," I say.

She gives the tin swan a glance. "Not when I want to eat it, it won't."

—CYNTHIA ZARIN

RAISED EYEBROWS DEPARTMENT

[From the Sporting News]

Armed with the changeup, Heaton won his first three starts to run his winning streak to eight games. His only major mistake in his first three starts was stealing a base against the Chicago Cubs April 22. Heaton ran on his own and was safe despite an awkward, headfirst one-night stand in St. Louis.

A REPORTER AT LARGE

PARROTS

PARROTS possess a strange allure. Even the tamest ones remain indomitably wild in many ways; some outlive the people who care for them; and many are so emotional that in the absence of a suitable parrot spouse they fall in love with a man or a woman. They sing arias when they are happy; they can flawlessly mimic a Mississippi bluesman or any television character whose voice interests them; and they are notoriously mean to people who upset them. Many caged parrots become known for personalities customarily identified only with people: they can be bashful, ornery, foul-mouthed, droll, or violently jealous. Parrots have always fascinated people, if for nothing other than their resplendent plumage, and they are now more popular than ever as pets. But in the forests and savannas where they come from they are disappearing.

About seventy species of parrots, including some of the most widely known ones, are likely to vanish within the next ten years, and of a world total of three hundred and thirty-two species all but three are formally listed in international treaties as threatened or endangered. Parrots are imperilled in part by the same catastrophe that imperils so much wildlife: the rain forests where they live are being cut down and paved or farmed; the natural habitat of some does not exist anymore. But rampant forest destruction is only one of their troubles. A major pressure on many surviving species of parrots is that people want to own them. Unlike elephants, rhinos, and whales, which are killed because valuable materials can be scavenged from their corpses, parrots aren't worth much dead. Alive, the rare ones are some of the most expensive pets on earth, and as their numbers shrink the price goes up, so they are hunted with increasing urgency. The scarcest parrots are coveted by collectors known as bird barons, who readily pay tens of thousands of dollars to obtain the last living examples of disappearing species. Trappers who supply the pet trade with lucrative exotic birds are now extirpating whole flocks—chicks, breeding pairs of adults, and birds that are decades old—and leaving behind too few strays to



keep species alive in the world. Some kinds of parrots are gone. Others have been reduced to fewer than a hundred; macabre field biologists refer to them as the living dead, because they have so little chance of survival.

Still, parrots are utterly familiar. Everybody knows what they look like, and if you don't you can see some in nearly any pet shop, where, waiting to be sold, they are caged, chained to a perch, or have had wing feathers cut off so they cannot fly. They range in length from three inches to more than a yard, and in color from olive green to fantastic medleys of yellow, blue, and scarlet. They are vertebrates, of the class Aves (birds), the order Psittaciformes. The most conspicuous feature of the Psittaciformes is a big, hard keratin beak that narrows to a sharp point and needs regular pruning, which wild parrots accomplish by vigorous mastication and by rubbing against trees, and caged ones usually need to have done with a nail file. Because the long upper

mandible curves downward over the lower one, parrots are called hook-bills, and because the upper one is hinged at the skull they wield tremendous power for their size—power that enables them to crush nuts for food and chew tree branches for pleasure. They have big heads and short necks, which give even the most graceful among them a look of compact strength. Their tongues are thick and rubbery, and are agile enough to serve as a finger to explore their environment, to help manipulate food, and, in some smaller species, to gather pollen. It is impressive to watch a parrot grab a seed with its beak and hull it: the bird uses its tongue to steady the seed against the ridged underside of the upper mandible, raises the sharp-edged lower mandible to deftly shear off the husk, then swallows the kernel—all in less than a second. The sharp beak is employed to slice into fruit and extract seeds (to parrots, the good part) and to dig into tree bark to get a grip when the bird is climbing around in a forest canopy. In captivity, even a medium-sized parrot can chew through a sheet of wallboard in minutes; big parrots are capable of bending cast iron.

Parrots are zygodactylous; that is, they have two sets of opposing toes on each foot, the middle two pointing forward and the outer two pointing back. This configuration makes for a powerful grip, allowing them to swing nimbly among branches and to grasp and manipulate big pieces of food with a prehensile skill rivalling that of a primate. The best climbing parrots can hang with ease by a single toe, or even just a toenail, and their feet are so strong that prying open a clenched foot is not only nearly impossible but dangerous to the bird: you might break its toes if it doesn't want to budge. Their big feet make them awkward walkers on the ground—where most of them hate to be anyway, because there they are vulnerable to jungle cats. When those extra-long digits, designed to wrap around a branch, are held flat, they extend to ridiculous lengths. As graceful as parrots may be in the air or climbing vines, on land they waddle pigeon-toed, teetering back and forth, and, because their heads are large and

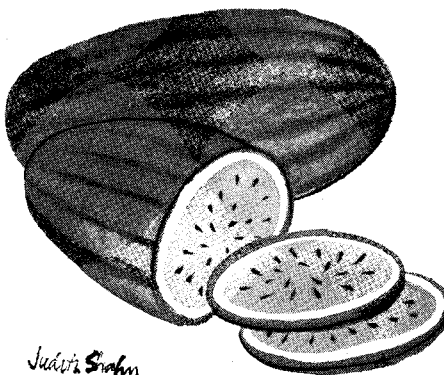
their legs are short, they always look as if they were about to topple over.

Parrots are usually organized by ornithologists into Old World and New World birds. A few inhabit the snowy elevations of New Zealand and Argentina, and the ground parrot, named because it prefers to run rather than to fly, nests in holes in the Tasmanian soil, but most kinds of parrots live in tropical lowland rain forests. The biggest, brightest, and loudest ones are the macaws, which are unique to the New World. Many species of macaw are named for their vivid plumage—the scarlet, the blue-and-gold, the green-winged, the hyacinth. They are majestic birds in captivity, more so in the wild, where their free flight is an exquisite thing to see. Their shallow wingbeats are scarcely visible as they sail in pairs above the forest; their blunt heads taper back to a streamlined breast and sabre-length tail feathers skimming out behind. When they fly close or flap their capacious wings for exercise, it is stunning to be hit by the gusts they generate. More than any other parrots, macaws are aerodynamic paragons—a radical alliance of lightness and strength. Even the most imposing of them, known in crueler days as being capable of killing a bullterrier in a one-on-one fight, weigh only a bit more than two pounds. Macaws, along with Amazons, African grays, and cockatoos, are the species in which parrot qualities are most pronounced, but other well-known kinds are conures, lovebirds, parrotlets, cockatiels, lorries, and parakeets. There are many kinds of parakeets in addition to budgerigars, or budgies—the miniature pastel chatterers that are the commonest cage bird.

The most familiar-looking parrots are the big green ones—the Amazons. Wallace Beery, playing Long John Silver, carried an Amazon on his shoulder in the 1934 movie version of "Treasure Island." Most Amazons are grass green, but the feathers of some are tipped with yellow, red, and blue on the head or the nape, and there may be a flash of red visible at the bend of the wing and among the flight feathers. Amazons are stocky—about a foot long, with thick bills and stubby tail feathers. For fun, they swing and dangle, sometimes hanging upside down by their toes from a vine or from a suspended cage toy and beating their wings furiously to propel themselves in

a delirious spin while they screech and whistle. The flight of Amazons looks like hard work: they flap madly and move through the air with a kind of stubborn persistence, more like a helicopter than like an airplane. One of the strangest things about many species of Amazons is the way they smell, which you aren't likely to notice unless you get within inches of them. They give off a musky aroma that is very much like a heavy, jungle-scented perfume for women.

There are twenty-seven species of Amazons, all native to the Caribbean, Central America, and South America; they are prized as pets because they are hearty and relatively self-reliant, but most of all because they talk so readily, and even sing. Some parrots do not talk. Most species can learn only a few phrases. Listening to a loquacious Amazon can be an awe-inspiring experience. Imagine a flying creature that swoops through the house every day at dawn calling "Good morning!" with the prim diction of a British butler or belts out "God Bless America" with Kate Smith's voice and gusto. A parrot talks by manipulating its syrinx, the lower portion of the windpipe; since it hardly uses its beak or tongue to modulate the sound, it looks like a ventriloquist. Amazons are among the best talkers because of their subtle intonation. They don't just repeat words. They amuse themselves by turning ordinary phrases into operatic trills or babbling with the bombast of a televangelist; they precisely replicate different people's voices; they reiterate the same phrase at different pitches, they screech it, they drawl it. This can be endlessly entertaining. However, some Amazons appropriate a set of sounds and never stop uttering them. Before the 1964 Presidential election, Marion Cunningham, the author of "The Breakfast Book," taught her pet parrot to say, "Vote for Goldwater."



For years, that was nearly all that the bird said, and it said it incessantly—even at night, when its cage was covered. To get a parrot to unlearn something it relishes repeating is practically impossible. For that reason, some Amazon owners learn to monitor what they say around their birds.

In the wild, Amazons and other parrots do not mimic roaring jaguars, hissing cobras, grunting peccaries, or even other kinds of birds. They imitate one another. Young parrots are taught by their parents and other members of the flock. They learn alarm screams and comfort sounds, and they echo noises back and forth among the trees to reassure themselves that all the members of a flock are where they are supposed to be. In flight, pairs of Amazons screech together—not quite harmony to human ears, but a kind of music. In captivity, parrots that are frightened or under stress rarely learn to speak. Steve Martin, the curator of the "World of Birds Show" at the Minnesota Zoo, who trains parrots and raptors to give demonstrations of their natural behavior, says, "Mimicry is something parrots do when they are emotionally happy. When a bird raised in captivity feels at ease, he wants to imitate his flock, which is what you or I become."

Our own pet parrot, Lewis, a yellow-naped Amazon, treats us as his flock, and the rooms in our house, each of which contains a perch or a play gym for him, as a grove of trees. When he is in one room and we are in other rooms, he frequently initiates a calling game by shouting out "Jane!" or "Michael!" We call back "What, bird?" and after a theatrical pause Lewis bellows "Hello, Bird-Boy!" followed by a lunatic human giggle and then a pause as he waits for one of us to call again. When we do, he responds with another trumpeted "Hello!"—this time in a different voice, which he has invented, or appropriated from the television set or from his early days at the pet shop. Calling from room to room of a yellow Colonial house in Connecticut is the closest he will ever get to the natural parrot behavior of tree-to-tree communication in the forest. He has come to regard the ringing of the telephone as a rousing alarm call, as if a member of his flock had just warned of a hawk or an eagle winging overhead. Before we have a chance to pick up the phone, he stops whatever he is doing and starts

to shriek, his voice escalating into a cacophony of intelligible words interspersed with feverish babble that sounds like reversed English. As he senses that the conversation is coming to an end, he begins to repeat "O.K., bye" until the phone is hung up. Then he is silent again or mutters himself back to sleep: the crisis has passed; the flock is safe.

Nearly all parrots make loud noises, which may or may not include the sounds of human speech. In Evanston, Illinois, there is a parrot that carries on rational conversations. His name is Alex, and he lives at Northwestern University, in the care of Irene Pepperberg, a visiting professor in the Anthropology Department; she teaches graduate and undergraduate classes, and, with project funding from the National Science Foundation and the Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation, she has been conducting experiments in interspecies communication. Alex is a species known as a gray parrot, from equatorial Africa. He is about the size of an Amazon, with white-tipped gray feathers that look like a coat of scalloped armor, and his tail is a luminous red; he has small, almond-shaped yellow eyes. He just might be the best-educated parrot in the world. For thirteen years, starting at Purdue, Dr. Pepperberg has been teaching him to communicate in English. She doesn't like to call his skill language ("He will have language when he can get up and deliver the lectures I deliver"), but she does believe that he has shown an aptitude rarely credited to birds. "Parrots may be intelligent because they live so long," she said. "They have to adapt to so many situations." When we met Alex, last fall, we spoke to him, and he spoke to us; we had a colloquy—the two of us, Dr. Pepperberg, a Northwestern University graduate student, and Alex. Nothing deep was discussed—mostly just Alex's likes and dislikes—but it was disturbing to consider that an animal capable of this level of mental activity is often kept in a small cage with little more for self-amusement than a bell to ring all day. "To put such an animal in solitary confinement, and not even give it a substitute mate, a person to be with, is cruelty," Dr. Pepperberg said. "On the avian scale of intelligence, parrots are like chimps among mammals."

Alex perched on the back of a metal folding chair in his laboratory

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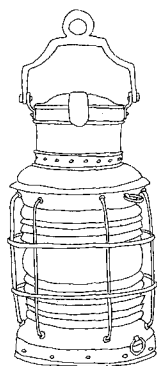
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(equipped with a television set, a video-cassette recorder, and boxes full of favorite toys) and requested a grape in a firm but polite tone of voice. We gave him a nut instead. He threw it on the floor and said, "No, want a grape!" He asks to be tickled; he cries "Want a shower!" when he is in the mood to be misted with a spray bottle; and if you show him a tray with x keys and y corks on it he will tell you how many of each there are. After a while, he got bored with proving his intelligence, and turned mischievous. When Dr. Pepperberg showed him a green plastic key and asked him to tell her what color it was, he rattled off every color he knew except green. Dr. Pepperberg explained, "This is his way of amusing himself—by watching the trainers get upset." A few years ago, when Alex lost interest in identifying the same old things—a collection of children's high-quality wooden toys—his intelligence (number of correct responses) began to drop off. Dr. Pepperberg brought in a carload of cheap, bright plastic toys—miniature pink flamingos and such. When Alex saw the new playthings, his pupils contracted, indicating extreme excitement, and his I.Q. shot up. He is definitely spoiled, although he does say "I'm sorry" whenever he bites someone. Dr. Pepperberg told us, however, that the words are hollow: he shows no remorse.

The Minnesota bird trainer Steve Martin is skeptical about Alex's brainpower, wondering if he isn't only mimicking sounds to get rewards, like any well-trained parrot in a trick animal show. Dr. Pepperberg believes that the difference is that Alex knows what his words mean. Some of what he says is self-taught. When he is tired of working with his trainers, he says, "I am going to go away," and turns his back. He was never taught those words; he picked them up because the trainers say them and then leave the room for a few minutes to punish him when he isn't working well. Dr. Pepperberg says that when a parrot in a bird show says what it is supposed to say the trainer always gives it a sunflower seed as a reward, whereas she and five undergraduate students assigned to the project make sure that Alex always gets exactly what he asks

for. Only a very smart bird could keep a good deal like that going for thirteen years.

Parrots are extraordinarily social creatures. When in captivity, if they find themselves in a house instead of a tree, most of them adapt to life among human beings and yearn to interact with us. Not only do they imitate our speech and, like Alex, learn to communicate but they also develop a passionate devotion to the people they live with—so deep in some cases that a pet parrot can die of loneliness if its owner abandons it. Parrots' eagerness to be close to loved ones is bred in them from the time they are born. Chicks are nurtured by their parents constantly for months. When they grow up and leave the nest, they find mates and live with them for the rest of their lives, which can be as long as seventy years. The bond between a pair can make for a poignant biological study. Tony Silva, an American bird breeder and the author of "A Monograph of Endangered Parrots," came back from a trip to Australia, where farmers kill cockatoos as pests, and told of driving past a field where dozens of them had been poisoned. "I saw females pulling and poking at dead males, standing by them with their wings spread and screeching, flapping and jumping, trying to get the dead or dying mate to fly," he said. Sometimes



extended families of parrots stay together for years after chicks have fledged, so instead of the usual pairs that go everywhere together, close groups of four or five can be seen flying above the forest. Old pairs and small clans will inhabit the same tree-hole nest for generations. Beyond the family, parrots associate in flocks, spending large portions of the day chatting from branch to branch and preening their mates or their children.

When parrots are in captivity, all these companionable aspects of their nature can persist, and such sociability makes them irresistible (if demanding) pets. Unfortunately, the qualities that human beings value in them are some of the same things that endanger their survival: all the time and energy they invest in socializing with their young means that very few young are produced; their steady habits, curiosity, and close family structure make them

easy to catch; and they are just too beautiful for human beings to resist wanting to possess them.

FOR five centuries, the parrots of the Americas have been valued by human beings in awe of their beauty and intelligence; at the same time, parrots have been hunted, trapped, caged, displaced, and exterminated. Columbus was dazzled by the sight of them. "Flocks of parrots obscured the sun," he wrote after landing in 1492. But most of the species he described in his journal—"big and little birds of all sorts . . . so different from ours that it is marvellous"—are now extinct. Many vanished even before seventeenth- and eighteenth-century naturalists took an interest in New World avifauna, so they are known only from incidental accounts by explorers and traders, who took some home as souvenirs and caught big macaws because they were good to eat. Natural historians believe that nearly every island of the West Indies had its own species of macaw when the first Europeans arrived; no such birds remain, and only one species, the flamboyantly feathered Cuban red macaw, can be seen today, in the form of about a dozen cotton-stuffed, feathered skins in museums. The last one was shot near the Zapata Swamp, southeast of Havana, in 1864.

The explorers who followed Columbus were so impressed by the number and variety of parrots they found that some sixteenth-century maps labelled America "Terra Psittacorum"—"Parrot Land"—and to this day parrots are often used as symbols of the allure of the Caribbean and of Central America and South America. When the first Europeans arrived, there were parrots of all sizes and colors throughout the Americas; one species—the Carolina parakeet—ranged as far north as Albany and west into Colorado. Columbus had come in search of spices, but the first commodity he acquired was parrots, which the natives of San Salvador, in the Bahamas, gave him in exchange for glass beads and red caps. He took forty Cuban Amazons back to the court of Ferdinand and Isabella, along with cotton, gold dust, exotic plants, and six Indians, whom he hoped to teach to speak Spanish. There is no record that he taught the parrots to speak, or that he knew they could be taught to do so.

Long before Europe began taking

parrots from the Americas, parrots were imported from India by Greeks and Romans—a practice begun in 327 B.C., when the army of Alexander the Great returned to Greece with tame Indian parrots as spoils of victory. Seventy years before that, the Greek physician Ktesias had been fascinated by a tame plum-headed parakeet that could speak both Greek and Sanskrit which he observed in the court of a Persian potentate. By the start of the second century B.C., a trade in parrots had been established with India and Ceylon to supply wealthy Romans with talking birds; a parrot cost more than a human slave, and might be kept in a cage decorated with silver, ivory, or tortoiseshell. The poet Crinagoras described a parrot that escaped from a Roman emperor and supposedly taught the wild birds of the woods to say “Ave!” In India, where the killing of parrots was forbidden, folklore depicted them as birds of rapture, pulling the carriage of Rati, the goddess of pleasure, and being ridden like a horse by Kama, the god of love; paintings of courtesans showed them holding parrots as signs of their profession; and one of sixty-four tasks that the “Kama Sutra” says a man should master is teaching a parrot to speak.

New World natives treated parrots as extraordinary birds because of both their plumage and their talents. Lowland Indians of South America caught macaws and traded their spectacular tail feathers to mountain tribes, which made them into ceremonial garments; a single headdress of the Kayapó tribe, in Brazil, can contain nearly all the tail and primary flight feathers from ten hyacinth macaws. One tribe developed a technique of introducing frogs’ blood into the blood of a macaw in the hope that the bird would grow more red feathers than green. Because of their capacity for speech, parrots were believed by some Indians to have human souls. Many tribes kept parrots as pets. Others raised and harvested the big ones as food. (The twentieth-century ornithologist James Bond, though, after whom Ian Fleming named Agent 007, wrote that he considered parrots “tough and unpalatable, decidedly inferior to herons.”) Some historians be-

lieve that feather-trading and bird-eating by the Indians of the Amazon, which has always had the most macaws, may have drastically reduced some species of the big birds—a decline temporarily reversed when the Indians themselves were nearly wiped out by European diseases in the sixteenth century. Starting in 1799, Baron Alexander von Humboldt, the intrepid German explorer who helped convince his friend Simón Bolívar that Latin America should fight for independence, spent five years in the jungles of the Western Hemisphere, where he claimed to have found a very old parrot that had been raised as a pet among the Ature Indians, a tribe that had become extinct. The parrot, Humboldt wrote, marveling, was the last being on earth to use their language.

Among the American naturalists fascinated by parrots was David Starr Jordan, the first president of Stanford University, whose memoirs, “The Days of a Man,” tell of a yellow-headed Amazon parrot named Loro Bonito, which he acquired from Mazatlán in 1893. Loro Bonito, Jordan writes, was originally able to imitate the fife-and-drum anthem of his home presidio but soon forgot that and all his Spanish when a maid taught him to sing “I’m

Called Little Buttercup” with an Irish accent. The bird’s greatest accomplishment, Jordan goes on to say, was his perfecting of the Stanford eight-rah yell, because it required learning not just the words (“Rah, rah, rah; rah, rah, rah; rah, rah; Stanford!”) but the arithmetical precision of the cadence. Jordan writes, “Sitting in the sunshine at the end of a great oak limb, he took special joy in shrieking out the staccato lines again and again.” The most famous parrot in America at the turn of the century was Eli, a big hyacinth macaw that lived in the White House conservatory (where the West Wing now stands) during Theodore Roosevelt’s Administration. Roosevelt wrote a letter to Joel Chandler Harris describing Eli as “the most gorgeous macaw, with a bill that I think could bite through boiler plate, who crawls all over Ted”—T.R.’s son—“and whom I view with dark suspicion.”

Exotic parrots were shipped north in ever-increasing numbers from Central and South America early in the twentieth century. Once available only to rich people and adventurous travellers, the colorful Neotropical birds had become fashionable and fairly common household pets by the twenties. Browse



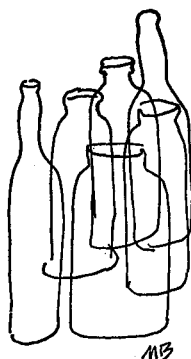
“I’ll have the blueberry buckle, with no political endorsement expressed or implied.”

through an antique shop today and you are likely to come across all kinds of parrot-motif lamps, wall sconces, and hooked rugs from the era. Metro studios, in Hollywood, used a parrot as its mascot until it merged with Goldwyn and the bird was supplanted by Leo the lion. In 1933, as a stunt to make people aware of the forthcoming Mae West movie "It Ain't No Sin," the Paramount publicity department trained fifty parrots to say "It ain't no sin" and planned to put them into theatres around the country the week before the picture was released. At the last minute, "It Ain't No Sin" was renamed "I'm No Angel"; Paramount announced that the flock of birds squawking the incorrect title would be sent back to the jungle instead.

Ironically, during the period when parrots from the Southern Hemisphere became the vogue, the native parrots of the United States were vanishing. For years, they had been taken by the feather trade, shot for sport, and massacred because they ate fruit and grain; by 1900, they were almost gone. The thick-billed parrot of the Southwest, a handsome bright-green bird striped with red on the forehead and the bend of the wing, and with a large, macaw-like beak, was never popular as a pet, for reasons given by a Mexican bird-trapper and related by the Marquess of Tavistock (the twelfth Duke of Bedford, a renowned ornithologist) in his 1928 book "Parrots and Parrot-like Birds in Aviculture": "Señor, they no good. Bite like hell. Perhaps catch three, four pair; no can use hands for weeks. Lady no buy; gentleman no buy; and damn bird no good to eat. What de hell de use?" Flocks of as many as fifteen hundred thick-bills used to fly north from the Sierra Madres into New Mexico and the Chiricahua Mountains, of Arizona, where they fed on pinecones and acorns. No one can say for sure why the birds stopped migrating into the United States, but it is known that they were regularly hunted early in the century, and that there was significant slaughter of the last big flock that flew north, in the winter of 1917-18.

The last living Carolina parakeet—the only parrot species native to the continental United States—was named

Incas. He died on a February night in 1918, at the Cincinnati Zoo. His keepers, who gathered around at the end to watch a species disappear forever, reported that the cause of death was not old age but loneliness: Incas's cage mate of thirty-two years, Lady Jane, had died only a few months earlier. His body—twelve inches long with a bright-yellow head, green wings and breast, and pinkish-brown feet—was packed up and shipped to the Smithsonian Institution, but, for reasons un-



known, it never arrived. Scientifically, the disappearance of Incas was no great loss, because ornithologists, who had been aware of the species' forthcoming extinction for at least half a century, had been shooting Carolina parakeets by the hundred to stuff them and preserve their skins for study in museums. Today, most good bird-skin collections contain

drawerfuls of Carolina-parakeet specimens, many of them taken from the last wild flocks in Florida, in the eighteenth-seventies and eighties.

As early as 1831, John James Audubon had remarked on how rare the once common native parrots were becoming along the Mississippi River. Audubon called the bird "always an unwelcome visitor to the planter, the farmer, or the gardener," especially annoying because it destroyed far more produce than it ate, plucking apples and pears for no apparent reason other than playful mischief. When the birds were fired upon, Audubon wrote, the survivors of a flock rose up shrieking, flew away, and then flew back, sweeping over the dead and wounded bodies and screaming, "as if conscious of the death of their companions." This made it easy to keep killing birds until there were so few of the flock remaining that they weren't worth the ammunition it would take to kill them. By the eighteen-eighties, Carolina parakeets were rarely seen by the hundred; they flew in small groups or in pairs. The last certain sighting took place in April of 1904, when the ornithologist Frank Chapman spotted thirteen birds near Lake Okeechobee, Florida.

THE popularity of parrots as pets crashed abruptly in January of 1930, when the world was stricken with fear of a newly discovered disease named psittacosis, because it was be-

lieved to be spread only by psittacines. The hysteria over what was commonly referred to as parrot fever started in Baltimore, where a zealous newspaper reporter connected a woman's illness with contact with a recently imported bird. Within days, the *Times* recounted parrot-fever outbreaks in metropolitan New York and in New Haven. People died of the disease in Toledo, Ohio; in Bienne, Switzerland; and in Berlin. In Bienne, four victims were all found to be customers of a hairdresser who kept a parrot in the shop. There was no cure for the disease, which doctors described as resembling both pneumonia and typhoid fever. On January 10th, the United States Surgeon General, Hugh Cumming, urged that all contact with parrots and their cages be avoided. People ran past pet shops with handkerchiefs pressed against their faces, and disowned hook-bills were spotted flying among trees in Central Park. At the end of the month, the Public Health Service banned parrot imports. Bird dealers denied that parrots were the cause, and Dr. Julius Bauer, a Viennese authority on internal diseases, attributed the fear to "mass suggestion." Lewis E. Lawes, the warden of Sing Sing, came to the caged birds' defense. "The inmates here think this talk about parrot fever is nonsense," he said, and he suggested that anybody with an unwanted parrot—red or green—send it up the river rather than condemn it to death. At that time, there were already ten parrots in Sing Sing.

During the parrot-fever panic, there were a hundred and sixty-nine confirmed cases of psittacosis and thirty-three deaths from it in the United States—small numbers compared with outbreaks of polio or influenza. But it was an especially haunting epidemic because, like the Black Plague, it was passed from animals to human beings—and, even more frightening, psittacosis was brought into people's homes by pets, not vermin. The frenzy marked parrots as dangerous animals, and that reputation lingers even today in some people's minds, although it is now known that psittacosis is not unique to psittacines. Up to ninety per cent of all feral pigeons, ducks, many domestic-turkey flocks, and possibly forty per cent of all pet-shop employees are thought to harbor *Chlamydia psittaci*, the organism that causes psittacosis; the chlamydiae can be carried asymptotically for years, or possibly a life-

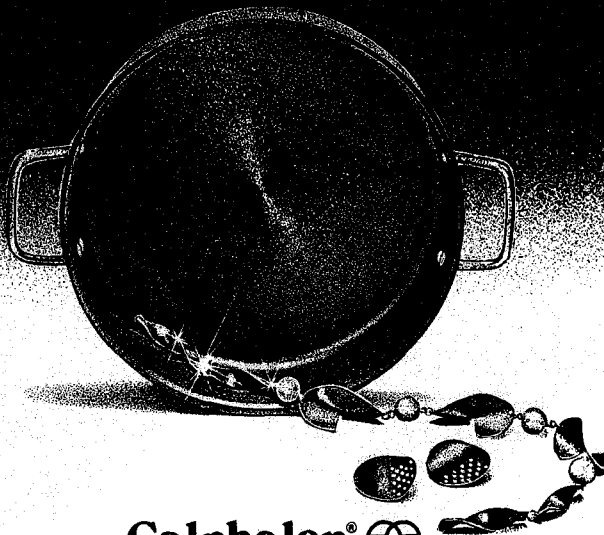
time. Antibiotics have reduced the fatality rate among human beings almost to zero.

In 1968, after protocols were developed to treat imported birds with chlorotetracycline for forty-five days before shipment, parrots started coming into the United States once again. Four years later, they renewed their reputation as public enemies when a few Amazon parrots in California escaped from a bird importer and infected chickens on a poultry farm with Velogenic Viscerotropic Newcastle Disease, which is extremely contagious and lethal. V.V.N.D., also called Exotic Newcastle Disease, cannot be passed to human beings, but it was a grave threat to the poultry industry; a national emergency was declared, and forty-six thousand square miles in Southern California and Arizona were placed under quarantine, which was enforced at the border and within the United States by the Department of Defense. Once again, suspect parrots were slaughtered, this time by the federal government. At the epidemic's peak, people who were stopped at a roadblock and found to have a bird were required either to turn around or to surrender the bird to government inspectors to be destroyed on the spot. An inspector would stuff a pet parrot into a plastic bag, tell the driver to keep the motor running, and then go around to the back of the car from which the bird had been taken and hold the open end of the bag over the exhaust pipe until the parrot died. The scourge was contained by late 1973, and a system of quarantine stations was established to test all imported birds for V.V.N.D.

During the seventies, parrots became even more popular than they had been before the psittacosis scare. In that decade, when many stylish people sought extreme ways to express their individuality, one well-publicized method was to keep a wild animal as a pet. Compared with a dog or a cat, a big parrot is flamboyant and conspicuous—a good advertisement for someone trying to be seen as unconventional. Thanks in part to the television show "Baretta" (1975-78), in which Robert Blake starred as an eccentric police detective who lived with a sulfur-crested cockatoo named Fred, parrot ownership looked hip, and the demand for cockatoos as pets skyrocketed. "I cannot tell you how many people told me they wanted a

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It was once considered a slight to the painting to remark on the beauty of its frame. Today, however, collectors prize a period frame such as a Carrig-Rohane as an art form in itself, worthy of study and appreciation.

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'Baretta bird,' " Donald Bruning, the curator of ornithology at the Bronx Zoo, says. This popularity couldn't have happened to a less appropriate species. In some ways, cockatoos, which are native to Australia, New Guinea, and Indonesia, are the most lovable and loving of parrots. They are gorgeous: most of them are glossy white, like just laundered linen, and as soft as down. Of all parrots, they are the most emotionally incontinent. They crave affection, and once they have found their mate in the wild they are loyal for life, and spend decades preening, cooing, and cuddling with their beloved. This lavish sentimentality can make them enchanting pets, but it has a painful side. Once a cockatoo is settled in a home, it succumbs to instinct and accepts its owner as its mate. Then it becomes an insufferably needy lover, and can get extremely agitated when its mate walks out of the room, even for a few minutes. To summon back the object of its ardor, a cockatoo will let out ungodly shrieks; and often, if it cannot get the attention it craves, it becomes so distressed that it plucks out its feathers. Because Fred in "Baretta"—a role played by five trained cockatoos—never showed such typical cockatoo behavior as seed-flinging, furniture-chewing, incessant screeching, and self-mutilation when neglected, viewers thought of cockatoos as cuddly toys, and bought them by the thousand. Many found themselves in possession of a bewildering animal, fully capable of biting a finger to the bone and more demanding than a newborn infant. But what can a person do with an unwanted bird? Unlike a hula hoop or a pet rock, a parrot that outlives its appeal as a fad cannot be stored in the attic. Hundreds of these sensitive-souled creatures, taken from their mates and families in the South Pacific, wound up neglected or mistreated, and soon dead.

The "Baretta" fad has passed, but parrots are still popular. Nearly a million birds, about a third of them psittacines, are legally imported into the United States every year. The exotic-bird business is regularly stimulated by newspaper and magazine stories that enumerate which celebrities own what kind of parrot (Elizabeth Taylor has a yellow-nape, Robin Williams a Mexican yellow-head), and describe parrots

as the latest thing in fashionable home accessories—"the Perrier of pets," according to the magazine *Today's Animal Health*. In February of 1989, a *Times* article declared parrots "urban pets of the moment," and said they were considered "an apartment dweller's dream," because they didn't need to be walked and didn't shed. The Bird Jungle, a shop on Bleecker Street, was reported to be selling twenty-five or



thirty parrots a month—up from five a month when it opened for business, in 1982. The *Times* described a twenty-five-hundred-dollar cockatoo, named Rocky, that liked to ride on the steering wheel of its owners' white Ferrari convertible.

There are perhaps twenty-eight million pet parrots in American homes, and they are getting more popular each year. To keep them and their owners in good spirits, an imaginative industry has developed to supply fancy apurtenances, including Advanced Avian Designs' six-foot-tall Parrotree ("The chewing bird's delight, a tree with replaceable branches"); birdcages custom-manufactured by Avian Architects of Texas in building styles to match the bird owner's home; "Parrot Talk," a ninety-minute audiotape home-study course in talking and singing (it includes the phrases "I love you" and "Bye-bye," and the songs "Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin'" and "Jesus Loves Me"); and monthly supplies of live mealworms that can be ordered from a company called Grubco, which promises that parrots thrive on them.

Taking care of a parrot demands a sensitivity that goes beyond the common sense most people rely on in taking care of a dog or a cat. Dogs and cats, after all, are like us—they are mammals—and it is usually easy to know what they want and need. Birds are weird—feathered and scaly, hatched from eggs, hollow-boned reptiles with wings. Scientists consider them direct descendants of the dinosaurs, going back a hundred and forty million years to the archaeopteryx, and although parrots are easy to anthropomorphize, especially when they learn to talk, sometimes they behave less like Old Yeller than like Godzilla. To help today's conscientious parrot owners understand their pets, *Bird Talk*, the largest-circulation magazine for cage-

bird fanciers, features an advice column called "Parrot Psychology." L.S., of Florida, writes to say, "Aero, my scarlet macaw, will . . . regurgitate on any shoe within his reach." E.T., of Texas, says, "My lovebirds do not shred paper; they just chew and bite on it, and they do not stick it in their rump feathers. Are my lovebirds both females or not?" (Answer: Not necessarily. "Only peach-faced hens carry nesting material in their rump feathers; [other female lovebirds] carry it in their beaks.") J.M., from Georgia, sadly reports, "My bird also sings jazz, barks like a dog, meows and does a great smoke alarm. Hard as I try, however, I can't seem to get him to learn anything I want to teach him. . . . He positively hates my husband and calls him Uncle Ralph, even though my husband's name is Stan." *Bird Talk* readers also have a chance to "Ask the Experts" questions about nutrition, artificial-nest construction, and hand-rearing chicks; they are answered by a group of bird breeders and veterinarians.

The increased popularity of parrots as pets worries veterinarians and biologists, for they know that keeping a parrot properly requires far more effort than keeping a domesticated animal, and can demand not only a lifetime commitment but also a willingness to make arrangements for an even longer time, in case the parrot should outlive its owner. Parrots remain jungle animals, no matter how well trained and elaborately socialized they become. A cage in a house is an acutely unnatural environment for them, and many parrots, however amiable, never lose their love of shrieking just for the fun of it, chewing wood (or woodwork, or the spines of books, or shoe soles, or typewriter keys, or your favorite leather purse), and hurling food into the air with animal delight. If they really love their owner, they will fly onto a shoulder and regurgitate their most recent meal (as they would for an avian mate), and they may attack any other creature (adult, baby, dog, cat) whom they view as a rival. Considering that parrots were born to fly free and are at most a few generations away from life in a tree, some animal lovers wonder if it makes any kind of sense—moral or practical—to keep one in a cage.

We know of a chestnut-fronted macaw (one of the smallest of the macaws, weighing less than a pound) named

Charlie, whose owner, an ornithological illustrator and licensed bird rehabilitator named Julie Zickefoose, describes living with him as "like having as hostage a highly intelligent, demanding, eternally dissatisfied dignitary from a foreign land." She says, "You do everything you can think of to keep him happy, but he is never placated. He knows that you are holding him captive, and he will always hold it against you. It doesn't matter if he is domestically bred or imported. He knows he is a bird, and I know the setup here is not entirely to his liking, no matter how much he loves me and no matter how many pomegranates and papayas I buy him." To keep Charlie happy, Miss Zickefoose and her fiancé, a cartoonist and bird carver named Robert Braunfield, spend a good deal of their time trying to provide him with the same kind of rowdy fun he would have with his flock mates if he were wild. Some of the games are like those which human parents play with babies. In one called Truck, Charlie lies on his back and Miss Zickefoose pushes him along the carpet and makes loud truck noises. "He chuckles as the world goes by upside down," she says. "If you stop before he has had enough, he lies on his back and pushes with his feet against your hand until you resume."

Miss Zickefoose has sent us written instructions for a couple of new games that she and Mr. Braunfield have developed to keep Charlie amused. One is called What If There Was a Monster? "Bird must be in a dark place, under a dresser or under bed-covers," she writes. "Human raises covers, saying, 'Charlie, what if . . . there was . . . a MONSTER?' At the word 'monster,' which is sort of roared in a scary voice, bird raises wings and rushes out from under covers and shrieks, bites human all over face, then runs back in and waits for another round. It is now number one on Charlie's Hit Parade of Games. Up-and-coming is the Family Shriek, in which we all put our heads together and sing 'Old MacDonald.' It starts out orderly enough, with

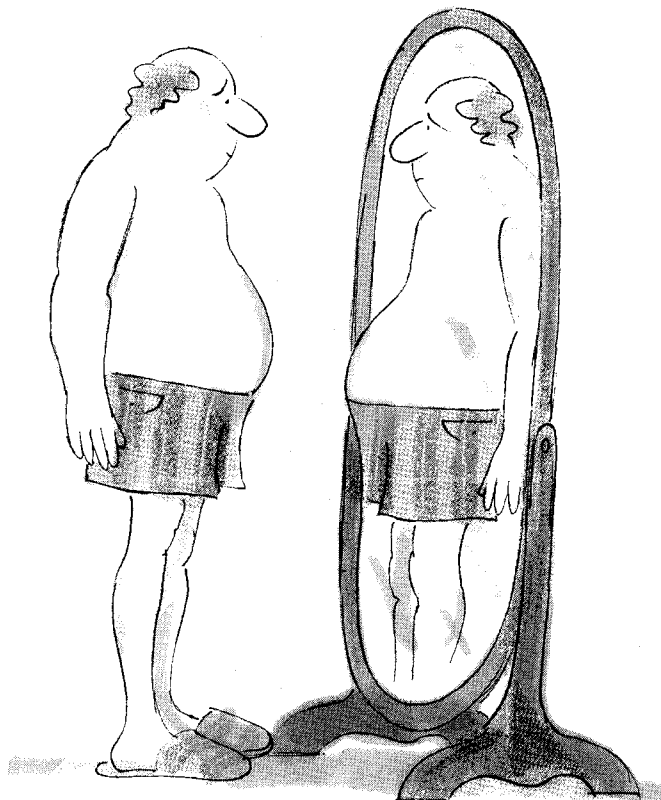
pretty well-spaced quacks and howls, but quickly degenerates into an outright screaming bonanza. Charlie's hair stands on end and he stretches up as tall as he can and screams his bloody head off." Miss Zickefoose, who lives in a cottage surrounded by woods, in East Haddam, Connecticut, adds, "Clearly, we would not do well in a condominium complex."

For the unlucky parrots in homes that don't provide some semblance of jungle pleasures, captivity can be torture. Avian veterinarians predict an average life span of two to five years for captive parrots, whose natural life span might be seventy years or more. Most of them die of malnutrition or mistreatment, and some just go crazy, the way a person might go crazy who was taken out of a familiar social situation and put into solitary confinement. Many parrots bought on a whim are resold or given away. We have never met a zookeeper who recommends a parrot as a pet: zookeepers hear too many pitiful stories from people who call with unwanted parrots that they hope to donate to the zoo, because the birds scream, bite, and throw food all over the room—in other words, act like parrots. No zoo can take all the pariahs it is offered, and some zoos now suggest that the birds be put in a captive-breeding pro-

gram, where they might be happy and help their species thrive. Because parrots are expensive and people want to recoup their investment, many rejected birds are sold through want ads, like used cars; some are returned to the store where they were bought. The Minnesota Zoo's Steve Martin, who is offered about fifty unmanageable parrots each year, says, "The casual-interest parrot owners happen by a pet shop in the mall, see a parrot in the window, and say, 'That looks cool!' The pet-shop owner talks them into buying this thing. And they find out relatively quickly that the bird is more of a frustration and a bother than it's worth, so they end up selling it or taking it back. That is certainly not good for the bird. But the biggest problem is that a lot of these people don't get rid of it. They just end up smacking it with a newspaper, or stowing it in a corner and neglecting it."

At the Beardsley Zoological Gardens, in Bridgeport, Connecticut, we met two exceptions to that zoo's rule against taking unwanted parrots. They were Lorita and Pepito, a bonded pair of forty-five-year-old Amazons, whose owner had recently died of old age. The owner's children did not want their mother's parrots, which spoke

mostly Spanish, and whose wings were atrophied from lack of use. Now the parrots live in a small cage in a laboratory room next to the office of the zoo director, Gregg Dancho. He says he simply couldn't refuse a pair of birds so venerable. They are too frail to be let loose in a rain-forest environment the zoo is building, and although they are accustomed to a human caretaker, they might not fare well on exhibit—they'd probably be surrounded by too many people. So, except for an occasional outing with a zoo volunteer, there they sit, shoulder to shoulder on a wooden perch in their small cage, alone most of the day, quietly chatting to each other in Spanish-accented parrot twitters. They are better off than many of their kind: they get good



Samuel Altwasser

food in their cup, and a veterinarian looks in on them periodically, and they have each other.

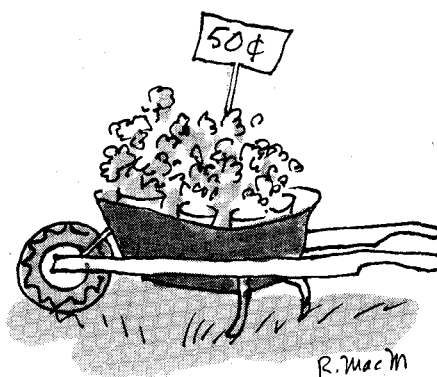
OF the millions of parrots that people keep as pets, nearly eighty per cent were captured wild. Those taken as adults are called broncos, and for good reason: they are difficult or sometimes impossible to tame, because they have learned to be free. Parrots taken from the nest as chicks can be hand-raised and stand a good chance of becoming friendly pets. The wild-caught-bird trade supplies the United States with about half a million pets a year. Perhaps a million more are shipped to Europe and Japan. The ones that arrive alive in pet stores are the survivors of an appalling journey of attrition, in which babies starve, adults are tormented, mated pairs are separated, and whole flocks are destroyed. More die than live. They die of stress, neglect, filth-engendered disease, and dehydration—all, of course, at human hands.

The journey starts in the hollow of a tree chosen by a pair of parrots because it provides protection for them and their brood against the elements and many predators. Like owls, most parrots do not build twig nests; they prefer the security of a large tree, perhaps two or three hundred years old, that has a hollow limb or a rotten cavity in the trunk—a hollow or cavity that they may expand but will not create from scratch. In the safety of the nest, eggs are laid and incubated, and chicks hatch. The male parrot will fly off as part of a group foraging for food, while the hen stays close to the nestlings and keeps other parrots from snooping around the hole. When bird catchers find the nest, the adults flee in fright: with occasional exceptions, parrots are not fighters, even among themselves. Trappers sometimes climb the tree, hack open the nest with a machete, and throw the flightless babies to a catcher on the ground. If a baby hits the forest floor or falls into the catcher's hand too hard, it dies instantly. Some parrot nests are hard to reach—either so high or in a limb so decayed that climbing is dangerous. The routine solution is to chop the tree down and hope that some of the chicks in the nest survive the fall. Most of them are crushed or killed by the crash, but chain saws have made tree-felling easy, and if a trapper is working on a large flock of a still

common species of parrot the odds are that enough nestlings will survive the destruction of their trees to fill his order. Even when trappers leave parrots' trees standing, adult birds that survive the attack are not likely to return to the nest. For a parrot, a nest is everything—shelter, security, family—and a good one, in a suitably old tree, is rare even in virgin forest, and rarer still where human beings have left their mark. It is impossible to say what parrots feel when their babies are stolen, but one can guess that, since young parrots often stay with their parents for many years, bereft parents must experience some kind of trauma. When a clutch is stolen and the parents survive, they try to find another tree, where they can start life again.

The critical consideration in taking baby birds is not to get them so early that they all die of exposure. Because the birds are accustomed to being nurtured by their parents in the warmth of a tree hollow, they are often mortally stunned when they are thrown into a box with hundreds of other chicks and expected to learn to fight for scraps of moistened bread or tortillas. Of every ten parrot nestlings harvested, six or eight die within four days. The causes of death include shock, suffocation, and infection from the filth in their container.

Although chicks are valuable, there aren't enough of them, so bird catchers go after adults, too. Shooting at parrots in the hope of only crippling them is an old-fashioned and inefficient technique; it wastes ammunition and often kills the birds. Nonetheless, some birds are taken this way—most often large macaws that live in trees too big to chop down easily. They may sicken and die weeks later from lead poisoning, but that is of no concern to the trapper: he will have been paid for them and have sent them on their way long before they show symptoms.



Professional bird catchers may receive orders for hundreds or thousands of birds from dealers who supply the pet trade, and they operate on a large scale, using techniques that bag whole flocks at once. Giant nets are hung among trees in the forest canopy; clapnets are laid on the ground and baited; and foot snares are set on posts around a live decoy bird. One time-honored method for catching big parrots is the glue stick. In Paraguay and Brazil, Guarani Indians make glue sticks by boiling sap called *curelica-i*, from a small tree that grows along the rivers in the upper part of Paraguay. The sap is processed until it is a gummy mass, the consistency of chicle, and can be wrapped around branches taken from a tree. The prepared branches are tied back onto trees, and a previously captured "distress" bird is brought out. The bird is either tethered to a stake or put in a sack and beaten or kicked. The bird cries out, and members of its family or flock come around to investigate. They land on the prepared branches, their feet get caught in the glue, and the weight of the stuck birds sends the glue sticks tumbling to the ground. The trappers then chop off the birds' flight feathers, pry their feet off the glue sticks (which can be used again), and throw the birds back up in a tree, where they stay until the order is filled. The captured birds may try to fly once or twice, but when they hit the ground they realize that there is no hope, and afterward they stay where they are put. The advantage of keeping them on branches rather than in cages is that if a patrol plane flies overhead looking for illegal bird-trapping—as sometimes happens in Brazil—the police see only an innocuous scene: a flock of birds roosting secure in their trees.

If a parrot's flight feathers have not been removed during trapping, they will most likely be cut off when the bird arrives at the exporter's holding facilities. Besides preventing escape, removal of the feathers tends to make parrots more docile when they realize they have lost the ability to fly. Wing-clipping hundreds of birds at a time is messy work. Machetes or scissors are used quickly and sometimes brutally. The ornithologists Matthew M. Vriends and Herbert R. Axelrod write in their book "Parrots" that among shipments of African gray parrots "it is not unusual to see a chunk of the meat of the wing, bones and all, also

hacked off." For a newly trapped adult bird, accustomed to free flight, or a nestling that knows only parental care and the safety of a tree hollow, life in a holding facility awaiting export is a drastic change. Hundreds of birds are kept together in wood or wire-mesh crates stacked on top of one another. Babies are fed gruel with eyedroppers, funnels, or small spoons. Adults are given dishes of water and mush or seeds, and the crowding quickly causes food and water supplies to be soiled by excrement. Many birds accustomed to eating insects, grain, or fruit die of starvation, because they cannot adjust to an artificial diet. In a well-run, hygienic holding station, dead birds are removed from the floors of cages every morning.

Survivors that are bought by an American importer are again crowded into crates and shipped in the cargo hold of an airplane, usually to Miami or Los Angeles. Once they have been removed from their barbarous captors and the savagery of the exporting facility, the bewildered birds encounter a new level of cruelty: the United States quarantine station. To keep out Exotic Newcastle Disease, the law requires that all imported birds spend thirty days in quarantine before being released for sale. There are some ninety quarantine stations around the country. All are supervised by the Department of Agriculture, but, oddly, most are privately owned and operated by professional bird importers. Even more oddly, Agriculture Department personnel at a station are paid their fees by the importer when a shipment of birds arrives, and a Department biotechnician who is supposedly in charge of upholding quarantine regulations almost always works for the same importer on a steady basis: his job is at the mercy of the people he is supposed to regulate. Anyone who does not own a quarantine facility and wants to bring a pet parrot or a few birds into the country must make arrangements with a licensed station and pay for space, but the process is risky, for more than one reason. A professional bird handler who regularly moves trained birds in and out of the country told us that the employees of one quarantine station boasted to him that they frequently stole rare or tame parrots and told the owners that the birds had died.



The purpose of quarantine is not to make birds healthy. It is to encourage the outbreak of disease. Except in a handful of scrupulously clean government-owned stations (for confiscated birds, which are kept in Plexiglas chambers called isolettes), imported parrots are warehoused by the hundred in wire cages or wooden boxes with minimal ventilation, so if one bird is harboring a virus the disease will break out quickly and become apparent during the thirty-day period. This is effective because there are too many birds to test every one; but if the spread of disease is encouraged a few are bound to die. All birds that die during the first fifteen days must be tested for V.V.N.D., and if one should prove positive the whole lot must be returned or destroyed. Because no one wants to pay for the return of diseased birds, the standard procedure is to use lethal gas to kill them—or, in Agriculture Department language, depopulate them.

Most privately owned quarantine facilities are decrepit garages in parts of town where the stench won't bother anyone and the screams of hundreds of terrified birds can go unheard. Regulations specify that visitors must wear respirators, for the air is thick with floating tufts of down and with a fine, putrid dust—a blend of caked food, dried excrement, and desiccated blood which swirls up from the bottoms of the cages. Wings flap in panic; birds squawk to declare aggression, fright, or submission; and some are mortally injured in fights for cage space. Wounded parrots that survive are later sold at a discount as "imperfects." When there aren't enough perches, birds cling to the wires on the side of a cage or stand on the cage floor in their mess, among parrots too weak to perch any longer and the corpses of others. During the period of confinement, birds are given feed or water dosed with chlortetracycline to treat psittacosis, but, because they are so agitated and eat irregularly, blood levels of the drug are too erratic to cure the disease (which in any case requires a forty-five-day treatment); instead, the course of medication disguises symptoms and decreases a bird's normal flora, allowing pathogenic bacteria to proliferate. At the end of the thirty days, if V.V.N.D. tests have been negative, the surviving birds, now banded with a stainless-steel leg cuff to

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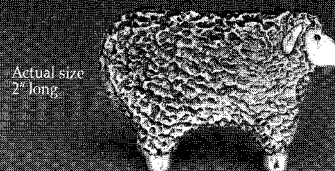


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identify their place of quarantine, are released to wholesalers and then are peddled to pet stores everywhere except in New York, the only state that has a law forbidding the sale of wild-caught birds.

THERE is another way that wild-caught birds get from their natural homes into the homes of pet owners: they are smuggled. The World Wildlife Fund's Trade Record Analysis of Flora and Fauna in Commerce estimates that about a hundred thousand parrots are moved illegally into the United States from Mexico every year. The profits from smuggling are even higher than those from the legal live-bird trade, and, paradoxically, that means the merchandise is even more expendable. Mortality has been estimated at eighty per cent, but when a common Amazon parrot costs less than ten dollars from a native trapper and sells for a thousand in a pet shop only a few birds out of dozens need to withstand the agony of the illegal passage to yield the smuggler a handsome profit.

Birds are hard to smuggle, because they are noisy and they need to breathe, but illicit parrot shippers have devised many ways of overcoming these difficulties. A wholesaler in Brazil whose alias in the trade is Carioca is skilled at packing a small wooden crate full of live Jenday conures—fragile little parrots with bright-orange heads, red breasts, green-blue wings, and bronze-green tails. Carioca presses in as many as possible, nails the box closed, and holds it down in a tub of ice water. After a short while, he lifts it out and seals it in a potato sack labelled "Domestic Fowl." The conures, which naturally have a loud cry, are numbed by the ice bath, so there is no sound from them until they begin regaining consciousness, on the other side of airport security. It is also possible to tape birds' beaks closed, but this is a time-consuming process for a large shipment, and there is a risk that the tape will be clawed loose unless the birds' feet are bound, too. Taping beaks does not keep parrots totally silent, but it does quiet them down, and it also helps to prevent them from cannibalizing one another, which they sometimes do when they panic in cramped quarters after being confined too long without

food or water. More common methods of keeping birds silent while they are being smuggled are drugging them with aspirin, brandy, or tequila, and blanketing them with chloroform.

Live birds' need for air might be expected to limit the degree to which they are wrapped and sealed to prevent detection, but dead parrots have been discovered at the border bound and stuffed into panty-hose legs and false-bottom boxes, swathed in burlap and stowed in unmounted tires and car-door panels, and crammed into polyvinyl-chloride pipes plugged at both ends. Even when wrapped birds can get air, they often die from overheating because they are unable to spread their wings. We recently saw five young scarlet macaws in the Canary Islands that had been confiscated because their smuggler had not been able to keep them quiet. Almost a week had passed since the big South American birds were discovered at the border, crammed into a small box, barely able to move, but they still appeared dazed, and they wobbled on their feet as they tried in vain to get comfortable on a perch. They were scrawny, and their eyes were not focussed. One of them—it appeared to be the youngest—quivered and panted with an open beak; it was oblivious of our presence.

Bird smuggling, with all its brutality, will continue as long as wild-caught birds can be sold legally. Many pirated parrots wind up in pet shops wearing a phony quarantine bracelet and looking perfectly legitimate. In some cases, the dealers themselves are the smugglers.



In May of 1989, undercover agents of the Fish and Wildlife Service, posing as collectors of exotic birds, broke up a conspiracy headed by the owners of a pet shop in Long Beach, California, called Exotic Feathers. The shop

placed orders with exporters in Buenos Aires and Singapore for the various species it wanted, including endangered and legally protected cockatoos and macaws. With the help of forged international-trade documents, the birds were packed and shipped to a corrupt veterinarian with an office at the Mexico City International Airport. Those birds which survived the flight (about fifty per cent, according to a representative of the Fish and Wildlife Service) were sent to a safe house in Tijuana, from which they were smug-

gled over the border to Exotic Feathers, which then distributed them to dealers throughout Southern California, who, in turn, sold them to the parrot-loving public. The smugglers, charged with violations of international treaty as well as of domestic laws, faced prison terms of up to sixty-five years for their crimes; so far, those sentenced have been given terms of two years or less.

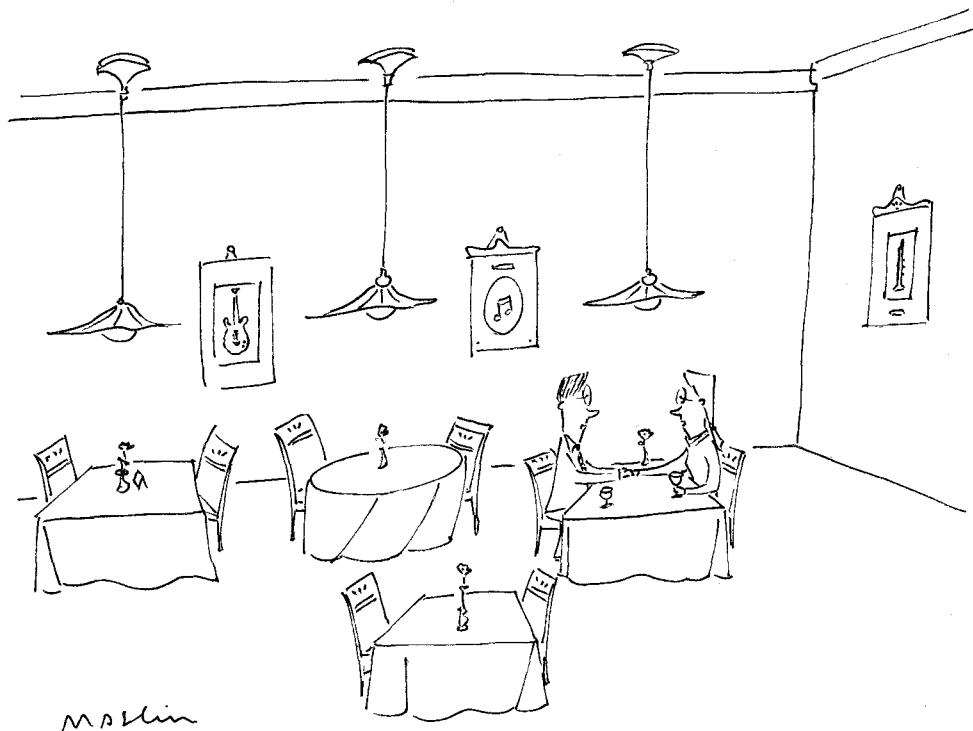
NOT all parrots sold by pet stores have been stolen from nests in the wild; some have been produced by aviculture—the business and hobby of breeding birds. Most aviculture is not big business. The majority of people who breed parrots do it in a finished basement or a spare garage bay, and share their pastime with other hobbyists at monthly meetings of a local cage-bird club. They do what they do because they love birds and want to be around them. They bring their best-looking specimens to bird shows to be judged on such criteria as size, shape, condition, and color. Unlike dogs and cats, cows and horses, and small cage birds, including even budgies and cockatiels, big show parrots—macaws, Amazons, cockatoos—are not expected to conform to an absolute standard; there are just too many variations in each species, and most bloodlines are still only one or two generations long. In the pet division of a bird show, a parrot's personality counts as much as anything else: the parrot is judged on "friendliness, talking, whistling, singing, demeanor, and general response to people," according to the point standard issued by the Connecticut Association for Aviculture.

Few people made any serious attempt to breed large parrots in captivity until the seventies, when the demand for them as pets shot up and the supply of wild ones was noticed to be dwindling. Parrots were just one of the earth's formerly abundant riches that suddenly seemed about to vanish. In an effort by countries around the world to control traffic in all wild animals, including parrots, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, or CITES (pronounced "sigh-tees"), came into effect on July 1, 1975. At the first CITES meeting, in 1976, a resolution was adopted urging members to strive to limit their pet trade to captive-bred

creatures, with the aim of eventually eliminating the taking of wild ones. The CITES treaty has been signed by more than a hundred countries, including almost all the world's importers and exporters of parrots; yet some popular pet birds, such as the Moluccan cockatoo and the African cape parrot, have nearly disappeared in the last fifteen years, having been trapped to the verge of extinction by the legal and illegal wild-bird trade. In such cases, the only real hope of getting more of the birds, and perhaps the only hope for the species' survival, is aviculture. In England, in October of 1989, the International Council for Bird Preservation launched a Protect the Parrots campaign, to ban trade in all parrots that were at risk of extinction and to encourage the purchase of only captive-bred birds as pets. The Bronx Zoo's Donald Bruning, who supported the 1984 New York State law prohibiting the sale of wild-caught birds, believes that national legislation to keep imported parrots out of the United States is inevitable. "If it doesn't come for the right reason, to encourage captive breeding, it will come for the wrong one, because more and more species are endangered," he recently told us.

Compared with barnyard animals, dogs, cats, rodents, or even such small cage birds as canaries, most psittacines are extremely hard to breed. The qualities required of an aviculturist working with large parrots include superhuman solicitude; extreme vigilance in watching over eggs; tirelessness in spoon-feeding babies every few hours; a heart hardened to the inevitable death of many fledglings; and plenty of good luck. It also helps to have money, so you can buy such equipment as an incubator with an automatic egg turner, a Foster Parrot thermostatically controlled brooder box for chicks, and a Cloud 9 air purifier to prevent aspergillosis (a respiratory illness caused by moldy feed). Patience, however, is the foremost requisite of a parrot breeder: many of the larger species do not reach sexual maturity until they are five years old or more. Then they can be awfully fussy about a mate, plucking rejected suitors' feathers for no apparent reason, or squabbling and fighting every time sex is propositioned.

The fundamental problem facing aviculturists is figuring out a bird's sex. With some exceptions, parrots are monomorphic; that is, males and fe-



"I'm sorry, Dave, but I believe there are certain things one doesn't discuss under drop lights."

males look alike. In many cases, they also act the same. Their sex organs are internal, hidden under the tail in an opening called the vent. To copulate, two birds rub their vents together, with the male usually on top. It is a strange union, the top bird balancing precariously on his mate's back as he curls his rump low and the bird beneath him bends forward and swings her tail to the side, while both vocalize frantically. Often the top bird falls off. It is not unusual (in captivity) for two birds of the same sex to bond together and behave just like a heterosexual pair—regurgitating food for each other, and even copulating—and to stay that way for years, with their keeper wondering all the while why they aren't producing any chicks. Females that are not paired with an able-bodied male can bond with each other, and even lay infertile eggs. Once parrots are paired, whether the union is straight or gay, the range of their relationships is as diverse as that of human beings, and just as puzzling: some couples quarrel all the time but have an abundant sex life; others are passionless and seem scarcely to want to touch each other; some big parrots, particularly cockatoos, truly seem to be in love, snuggling close together, cooing and billing, and having sex three times a day.

In the sixties, Raymond Kray, a California veterinarian, began promoting the use of laparoscopy by aviculturists to discover a bird's sex surgically. This technique enabled parrot keepers to begin serious breeding programs. Inserted through the skin and muscles behind the last rib on the left side and snaked toward the kidneys, a laparoscope provides a clear view of the gonads. Females of most species have a single ovary, on the left (the right one is vestigial), which looks like a translucent cluster of microscopic grapes; males have testes, which are smooth and elongated. While looking around inside the parrot, a veterinarian can also determine whether it is sexually mature, by observing the texture of the reproductive organs.

Accurate sexing has made parrot breeding easier and more precise, but plenty of mumbo-jumbo that seems only dimly related to natural biology still goes on. Some parrots are inexplicably fussy about their nest boxes: the space cannot be too light or too dark; some like them round, some like them square; natural logs are nice, but there are birds that will scorn them in favor of a plastic garbage can with a hole cut in it. Some parrots breed best if they are kept in exceptionally small cages, which apparently provide a feeling of

security. Species from arid regions can be encouraged to breed if they are sprinkled with water, simulating a heavy spring rain. One of the most effective ways of getting a pair to procreate is to put their cage next to a cage containing a very amorous couple. This works best if the side-by-side pairs are of the same genus, so that their neighbors look vaguely familiar, but of different species, so that the males don't waste their energy strutting and showing off to impress the male next door. "It's like dominoes!" an aviculturist exclaimed as we watched a row of cages with mated pairs of different kinds of lorikeets. A pair of coconut lorikeets began to copulate, and then the Forsten's lorikeets to their left followed suit, and then the Edward's lorikeets next to them. On down the row, red-collared lorikeets, Weber's lorikeets, rainbow lorikeets, and Mitchell's lorikeets all picked up the action and started flapping up and down on top of each other. The parrot with the most dramatic mating ritual is the palm cockatoo, a fearsome-looking bird nearly three feet long and the color of anthracite. The male has featherless pink cheeks, which turn scarlet during courtship. He goes on to lift his crest, a narrow, backward-curving pompadour, spread his wings, and puff out the feathers on his chest, bending his head low to stare goggle-eyed up into the eyes of his hen. He might even pick up a stick in one foot and beat it on the ground, all the while issuing a ghastly repertoire of whistles and wails.

In one astonishing instance, breeding success has been achieved by applying psychology to aviculture. Ramón Noegel, the director of the Life Fellowship Bird Sanctuary, in Seffner, Florida, gets rare Caribbean Amazons, which were once considered impossible to breed in captivity, to produce large numbers of young in his aviaries because, he says, he listens to them. He credits his success to a willingness to communicate on an equal footing with the parrots and to free himself completely of negative emotions. "Birds are never fooled," he said in a paper delivered at the First International Parrot Conference, in 1986, explaining that he does not allow phonies or ego-maniacs to visit his aviaries. Those who are permitted to commune with the Amazons are expected to conduct



themselves "with a reverence and hush one would expect to be evident in some great cathedral." To help his birds stay happy and multiply, he plays tranquil music for them, including "Indian Love Call," "Red Sails in the Sunset," and Barry Manilow's "Memory." The sound of television or hard-rock music, he cautions, will result in unproductive animals or abnormally small clutches. Noegel's techniques confuse some aviculturists, but no one denies that they have worked with such hard-to-breed species as St. Vincent Amazons, Isle of Pines Amazons, and Grand Cayman Amazons; of the latter two, Noegel has reared third- and fourth-generation captive young. "Our special-

ization in insular species since 1965 has been so successful that we are faced with the problem of placing the offspring," he told us. Noegel is concerned that the natural habitat of the birds he breeds has become too perilous to try to return them.

It used to be thought that if a human being as much as touched a nest, however gently, parent birds would abandon it. Yet this policy of benign neglect meant that eggs were often lost because of accidental breakage, and chicks died when inexperienced parents hurt them. Most breeders now regularly tend their nest boxes, and veteran hens grow accustomed to it. One productive avicultural technique is to take the eggs almost as soon as they are laid. When that is done, hens tend to lay again ("double-clutching"), and sometimes they continue to recycle, yielding ten or twenty times the number of offspring they might produce in the wild. The snatched eggs can be incubated under other hens (Harry Sissen, a renowned macaw-breeder in Yorkshire, England, has pigeons sit on his parrots' eggs) or in a hatching box kept at ninety-nine degrees with a humidity of fifty per cent.

Sometimes successful aviculture is just good luck. In the spring of 1985, a customer of Petland, at the Knollwood Mall, in suburban Minneapolis, Minnesota, brought a hyacinth macaw into the store to board while he remodelled his home. Hyacinths are cobalt-blue giants, the largest of all parrots—forty inches from the tip of the huge, sickle-shaped beak to the end of the tail—and although they are extremely companionable in captivity, they were then

considered very difficult to breed. The big bird was put in Petland's front-window aviary, along with a store-owned hyacinth. Neither had been sexed, but after a month together they began copulating two or three times a day. "You could hear them cooing a block down the mall," the store manager, Ron Beckmann, says. The birds were provided with a metal garbage can on its side for a nest box, and soon employees started finding eggs in the can. On June 18th, a chick, later named Butch, was born. On September 12th, one named Jesse hatched; to everyone's amazement, Jesse was brooded not in the garbage can but on the floor of the window aviary, in full view of customers. Cameras flashed, children pounded on the glass, five thousand customers streamed past in a weekend. The owner of the boarding bird (which turned out to be the hen) agreed to keep it at the store, and it is still there. The compatible mates spend a lot of time breeding—until very recently, on a perch in full view of Petland's customers. (They now have private quarters upstairs.) Butch still lives at Petland, and he costs twenty thousand dollars—a price that the store's owner, Bruce Nathanson, says he hopes will discourage anyone from buying the bird he likes to call the first hyacinth macaw born in Minnesota.

Captive-bred, hand-raised baby parrots make the tamest pets, because they have grown up depending on human beings to nurture them. No one stole them from their nest, and they have not undergone harrowing weeks in transit and the ordeal of quarantine. Some breeders boast that their birds have been spoiled rotten, and demand that buyers continue to indulge them. America's best-known and most doting aviculturist is Richard Schubot, a co-owner of Miami's Parrot Jungle & Gardens. Schubot sells captive-bred parrots from an Avicultural Breeding and Research Center, in Loxahatchee, Florida, which he established, in 1983, because he became convinced that by the year 2000 most parrots would be gone from the wild. His birds, which include some of the rarest endangered macaws and cockatoos, are kept in hospital-clean cages; hatchlings are brooded in nests made of human-baby diapers, which are changed many times daily. The flock is kept secure behind a stockade wall topped with barbed wire and patrolled by guards carrying submachine

guns. Schubot runs an advertisement in *Bird Talk* that says, "Our birds live in the lap of love and luxury: hugs and kisses, chicken, tuna, steak, ribs, pasta, English peas, macadamias, pandamas, pine nuts, Brazil nuts (not peanuts), veggies, fruit, melon, grapes. Some even EAT THE TABLE WHILE DINING AT THE TABLE." Schubot signs all his advertisements "Love's Father," in honor of an especially beloved rare cockatoo, which he named Love.

ONE of the world's leading avicultural facilities and unquestionably the finest collection of living parrots is Loro Parque, on Tenerife, in the Canary Islands, about fifty miles west of Morocco. The Canary archipelago is part of Spain, and is a favorite destination for tourists from Northern Europe, who come to enjoy the hazy sun, the islanders' incessant festivals, duty-free shopping, and the sight of hundreds of parrots in cages. Loro Parque (*loro* is the Spanish word for "parrot"), in a walled enclosure in a cramped part of the seaside-resort town of Puerto de la Cruz, has an entryway marked by a mammoth two-sided billboard in the shape of a smiling parrot with raised wings, a cockatoo crest, and human eyes. Every day, almost two thousand sightseers come to enjoy the birds and a trained-dolphin show and to have lunch in a restaurant called the Patio del Loro.

Inside the high walls of the park, walkways lead through nineteen square miles of cacti, rubber trees, Canary dragon trees and date palms, and other lush jungle foliage. Overhead, free-flying monk parakeets chatter in nests they have built at the tops of palm trees. As you enter, two Festive Amazons in a cage next to the ticket booth say "Hola!" and then, as you walk behind blue-and-gold macaws on a waist-high stand, a camera flash goes off; when you leave, you will have a chance to buy a picture of yourself with the big parrots in the foreground. Farther into the park, you can pay a photographer to shoot a posed picture of you with a macaw or a cockatoo perched on your arm or shoulder. The paths lead past aviaries containing parrots from all over the world—two thousand specimens in all—arranged by genus and geography. Most of the Amazons are housed in adjacent cages, and there are rows of cages of African birds, cockatoos, conures, and lorries. Some enclo-

tures are big enough to house a dozen parrots that roost together and raise a ruckus. Smaller cages contain bonded pairs. Many big macaws with clipped wings sit two by two, uncaged, on tree limbs or in or around wooden nest boxes, where they spend their days gnawing on large pine branches regularly provided for their pleasure. Demoiselle and crown cranes strut freely throughout the park, across the pathways, and in a meadow in front of a flamingo pool. Other than the beauty and the variety of the birds themselves, the most impressive thing about Loro Parque is that it is immaculate. In the morning, when it opens and the plants are being sprinkled and the crews of custodians have picked up every cigarette butt and scrap of litter and scrubbed the concrete walkways, it seems like a Clorox-scented rain forest.

The hygiene of the park is something of an obsession with its owner, Wolfgang Kiessling, who often says, "Do you know why Walt Disney World is so great? Because it is clean. A tourist park without high standards of cleanliness should not be open." Kiessling, who is fifty-two years old, looks as if he might be a well-to-do German Army officer who has traded his uniform for creased white pants and a Gucci belt, tasselled shoes, a gold-and-silver Rolex watch, and a short-sleeved shirt unbuttoned enough to reveal a gold chain on his chest; he has close-cropped blond hair, his body is husky and strong, and even when he smiles keen blue eyes and a ruddy complexion give him a purposeful appearance. Kiessling and his wife, Brigitte, live in the center of the tourist park, in a canary-yellow villa surrounded by a soft lawn inside concrete walls and an iron fence. On the lawn and along a stone walkway that circles a peaceful sculpture of two cherubs and a dolphin, there is none of the tourist commotion that animates the park; even a mynah bird in a cage on the veranda of the house whistles and goes *glug-glug* with polite reserve. When strangers approach, Dino, a lumbering slate-colored Neapolitan mastiff with droopy eyes, rises from a wicker basket on the veranda and comes to have a sniff. He is shooed away by Ibrahim Jarju, the Kiesslings' houseboy. Jarju, a slender, ebony-skinned young man from Gambia who is

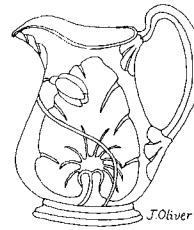
known to all as Ebu, wears either a mechanic's bright-red jumpsuit or a waiter's white tunic, depending on his current duties.

Over lunch, Kiessling talked about the destruction of the rain forest—a depredation that grieves him and is his justification for having appropriated some of the world's most endangered birds. "If we cannot protect them in the wild, it is better to protect them in captivity," he said. "As machines destroy kilometres of forest every day, responsible breeders are taking care of the birds we bring in. Without our reserves, we might wake up one morning and see that parrots have disappeared—that they are gone from the earth."

When Kiessling opened Loro Parque, in 1972, he was simply a young man looking for a good business. Having worked for an airline company that brought charter groups from Europe to the Canary Islands, he saw that Tenerife was a prospering place. Because he liked nature, his first idea was to build a safari park—lions, tigers, all the beasts of the jungle. Then he started worrying about the quantities of food that large mammals require, and realized that it would be hard to make a profit with an inventory that had such high upkeep costs. His father reminded him of a trip they had made to the United States, where they visited a zoo that specialized in parrots. "Parrots live for a hundred years, and they eat only handfuls of seeds," his father pointed out. Kiessling sent to Paraguay

for a few hundred assorted macaws, and built Loro Parque on a former banana plantation in Tenerife's Punta Brava. He hired a man to stage a bird show with parrots that performed tricks, such as pulling a miniature mule cart and raising

the flag of Spain. As Kiessling learned about parrots, he discovered that their maintenance was far more complicated than he had thought. Because Puerto de la Cruz had no avian veterinarian who met his standards, he often had to diagnose the birds' illnesses and treat them himself. Eventually, he brought his own full-time veterinarian to the park, and has hired some of the world's foremost aviculturists to curate the collection, including Britain's Rosemary Low, known to many bird breeders as "the first lady of aviculture," and, cur-



rently, Tony Silva, who has travelled extensively to study parrots in their natural habitats.

It is a matter of pride to Kiessling to provide his birds with the most fulfilling life he can imagine for them. "They have the right to live in the best circumstances when liberty is not possible," he says. "They have the right to security, good food, and no worries. Here everything is done for them." It was his idea to bring in pine branches so that the birds could satisfy their chewing instinct. Most of the cages are considerably larger than those of other parrot parks, and pairs are supplied with suitable nest sites; in the case of the palm cockatoos, that meant constructing a rather complex tree-stump arrangement—a job that required both skill and ornithological savvy. The food that Kiessling's parrots get is hardly the "handfuls of seeds" he originally expected to serve them. Each day, a kitchen staff cooks rice and grains and prepares seven to nine different kinds of beans—some sprouted, some cooked. The birds get corn on the cob, chick-peas, green vegetables, and a mixture of seasonal fruits, including apples, bananas, oranges, cactus fruit, and kiwis. Although this diet, which was devised by Silva, is underseasoned for human palates, it is robust and appetizing; and Silva says it will help put the parrots in a reproductive mood.

As Kiessling grew fascinated by parrots, he came to see himself as more than a businessman with a successful tourist attraction; he had become the proprietor of a big and potentially important collection. He began to feel the craving that assails so many who acquire a single hook-bill, or a pair. He yearned to own parrots—all kinds and as many as possible. He resolved to create the finest collection on earth. Kiessling had an easy time building his collection. In the seventies, if you could find a wild bird anywhere in the world you could own it for a price. Some countries, including Australia and Brazil, both important parrot homelands, had laws forbidding export of their native fauna, but before the CITES treaty such laws were hardly an inconvenience to a determined bird collector, for whom birds could be smuggled out with little fuss. Even in the early eighties, Loro Parque's acquisitions were effectively immune to CITES regulations protect-

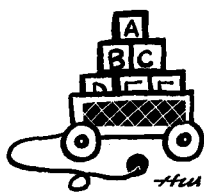
ing endangered parrots, because Loro Parque is in Spanish territory, and Spain did not ratify the CITES treaty until 1986. Into Kiessling's collection came Bolivian Caninde macaws (fewer than a thousand remain in the wild), red-tailed Amazons (the first ones in captivity outside their own country), the St. Vincent Amazon (there are sixty in captivity, only four hundred left on earth), rare black cockatoos, and dozens of other threatened or endangered birds. Even after Spain signed the CITES treaty, other rare and supposedly protected parrots found their way to Loro Parque. Last year, one of the world's two hundred remaining red-necked Amazons arrived from Dominica by way of Canada. Dominica's government subsequently sent a letter of protest to CITES declaring the bird contraband, but Kiessling defends his acquisition as legitimate, noting that the bird left Canada with proper documentation.

For at least twenty years, nearly every major breeding collection of psittacine birds has been built to some extent out of smuggled stock, and the biggest collectors—the bird barons—have become notorious for operating on the wrong side of international law. With parrot-rich countries banning wildlife exports and CITES regulating them, there has simply been no legitimate way for a collector to get important specimens. But it has never been very difficult for collectors to buy what they want, thanks to a flourishing distribution system that includes corrupt government functionaries with diplomatic privilege, and customs officials who don't care, or will look the other way for a price, or are too busy watching for drugs. One of this country's biggest bird importers, and a respected collector of exotics in his own right, boasted to us that the gift of a couple of television sets to the right people gave him access to just about any bird he wanted, however rare, from any country on earth.

Sometimes the legal bird trade is used to camouflage illegal birds: protected species are misidentified as legal ones. This is an effective tactic, considering that differences among some of nearly seven hundred and fifty subspecies of parrots can be imperceptible to all but ornithologists. At one time, when Indonesia banned the export of sulfur-crested cockatoos, bird traders simply

chopped off the birds' yellow crests (which would eventually grow back) and listed them on import papers as white cockatoos. For some coveters of rare parrots, the cachet of a bird is even greater if acquiring it has the whiff of piracy. One owner of many endangered parrots told us proudly that his collection—of birds snatched from the Neotropics, sneaked out of their native countries, smuggled into the United States, and now kept in a basement—was like a great storehouse of "stolen art masterpieces." Unlike stolen art, most smuggled parrots do not have to be concealed once they are acquired; laws protecting living birds are not nearly as strict as those covering inanimate merchandise.

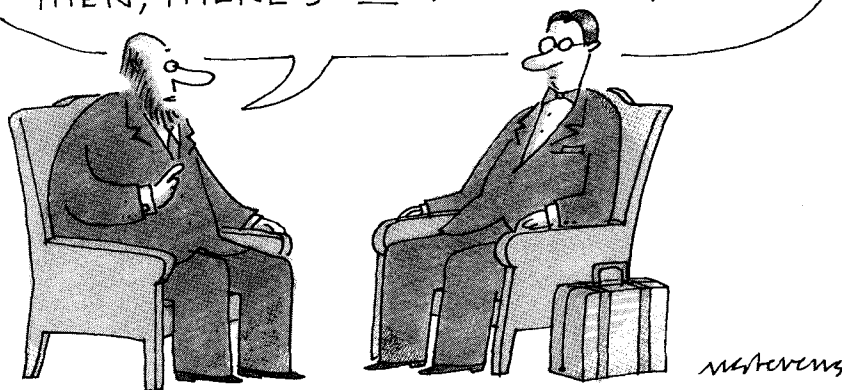
Today, there is a disconcerting irony in what has happened to many rare parrots: collectors who have plundered the forests and nearly annihilated some species in the last twenty years have become those species' only hope for survival, because the collectors are the only people who have any of them. The most appalling case in point is the Spix's macaw—a tragedy on the verge of conclusion. Named for Johann Baptist von Spix, who discovered it in 1819 in northeastern Brazil, and given its own genus, *Cyanopsitta*, after its pastel-blue plumage, *Cyanopsitta spixii* was always a rare bird. It became a hot item in the underground trade in the nineteen-seventies, when collectors eagerly bought up each year's supply of stolen nestlings and whatever adults they could get. By 1985, the entire wild population of Spix's macaws had been reduced to two known nests, whose chicks were being sold after each breeding season for anywhere from twenty thousand to eighty thousand dollars a pair. Finally, in 1988, the last two adults were trapped and sold to a collector in England, and the species was eradicated in the wild. Wolfgang Kiessling managed to obtain a doddering pair in 1984, and there are three Spix's macaws at the São Paulo Zoo; seven birds (two adults and their offspring) in the collection of Antonio DeDios, in the Philippines; a single tame male at Vogelpark Walsrode, in Germany; and about a dozen individuals in private aviaries in Brazil and Europe. They are all that is left of the species. Unless the collectors who hold these birds share their genetic assets, Spix's macaws have no future, but the rivalries among collectors are such that



no one is eager to lend a bird to another collection.

The Spix's macaws at Loro Parque are kept off exhibit, in a big, padlocked aviary that is jungle-thick with branches and leafy limbs and equipped with several nest boxes for the birds to choose from. Last year, they produced an egg—a glorious accomplishment for Loro Parque—but they accidentally broke it. Kiessling is confident that they will lay again and his collection will be enriched by the greatest of avicultural rarities—a captive-bred Spix's macaw. The desired event seems unlikely when you stand at one end of their wire enclosure and look through the heavy-gauge fence and the foliage at two pale-blue parrots perched close together on a branch at the back. They are a lonely sight. They watch your every move but scarcely move themselves. They appear shy, as if in some eerie way they felt themselves finally alone and about to become extinct; or perhaps the impression of shyness results from an inky featherless area around their eyes which looks like a mask. Maybe their reticence is natural behavior; but now that wild Spix's macaws don't exist anymore such things will never be known.

YOU COULD GO NORTH, ALTHOUGH YOU MIGHT FIND THE CLIMATE A LITTLE ON THE COLD SIDE, OR YOU COULD GO SOUTH, WHERE THE LIFE STYLE IS SOMEWHAT TOO EASYGOING AND COMPLACENT FOR A YOUNG MAN OF YOUR VIGOR. YOU COULD GO EAST, BUT, OF COURSE, THIS IS THE EAST. THEN, THERE'S MY FAVORITE, WEST.



HORACE GREELEY, UNEDITED

EVEN when a species dwindles to a genetically futile handful in the wild, some biologists believe it is wrong to collect survivors to manage them in captivity. Charles Munn, an associate research zoologist for Wildlife Conservation International, a division of the New York Zoological Society, who studies macaw nests from a harness hanging in a tree a hundred and sixty-five feet above the rain-forest floor in southeastern Peru, contends that the only way to protect parrots is to keep them wild. Wild ones sustain what he calls "parrotness"—the skills and behavior needed to survive. Even a single pair can be a cache of parrotness, which can be passed on to captive-bred birds reintroduced to the habitat. "Captive birds forget how to live," Munn says. "Parrots spend so much energy producing offspring; they put so much into their cultural transmission. All of that is lost when you remove them. No one even knows what the damn birds eat in some cases. How can we teach those birds to live? How much research is it going to take to show them how to survive in the wild again?"

In Arizona, a heroic effort is now

under way to restore endangered parrots to the wild. For the first time since the Carolina parakeet became extinct and the last flocks of migrating thick-billed parrots were hunted to death, the continental United States has living indigenous parrots flying free. In the fall of 1986, twenty-nine captive adult thick-billed parrots were let out of their cages in the Chiricahua Mountains, and fourteen more have been released since. Three small flocks have been established, and two chicks have fledged in the wild; fourteen more captive birds are ready to join the program.

The idea of reestablishing the vanished parrot came into being in early 1986, after the Fish and Wildlife Service seized a number of thick-bills that had been smuggled over the border from Mexico. Because thick-bills are considered endangered in Mexico, where they live, it is illegal to buy, sell, or possess one without a permit, but, for the same reason, they came to be coveted in the illicit-bird trade; their remaining habitat was being lost to development, and trappers were taking all they could find. In the mid-eighties, you could buy a thick-billed parrot in

Mexico for a couple of hundred dollars; proved breeding pairs were being offered in the United States for thirty thousand dollars. Samuel Jojola, a Fish and Wildlife Service agent in California, proposed that the confiscated thick-bills be used to try to reestablish the species in its once native habitat in Arizona. The birds taken by the government had originally been captured as adults, so it was assumed that they would know how to sustain themselves in the wild.

The release program, which is supported primarily by the Wildlife Preservation Trust International, is being directed by Terry Johnson and Noel Snyder, biologists with the Arizona Game and Fish Department. Snyder, who is the project's field supervisor, became known among conservationists as the man who brought the Puerto Rican Amazon parrot back from the brink of extinction. Starting in 1972, with a total population of nineteen Puerto Rican Amazons, he spent the next four years in Puerto Rico's Luquillo Forest trying to encourage the parrots to propagate. Few creatures on earth have ever been babysat with

such vigilance. Snyder and a team of field workers guarded every nest. They shooed away red-tailed hawks and pearly-eyed thrashers, the thrashers because they took over the parrots' nests, destroying eggs and killing chicks. The team built alternative nesting sites for the thrashers and spent long hours modifying the parrots' nests to make them unattractive to thrashers. They also built nest boxes of polyvinyl-chloride pipe, and tried to make them inviting to the Amazons by coating them with bark chips, for a natural appearance. When the feathers of 1978's East Fork No. 1 Chick (every bird was known and identified by year, nest, and number) were fouled by slime from a nest that had begun to rot because of rain damage, field biologists replaced them with molted feathers from aviary birds, gluing or pinning each feather onto the base of one of the bird's damaged ones. The regeneration of the wild population was agonizing work, but by the summer of 1989 the number of Puerto Rican Amazons had quintupled to a hundred, half of them wild, half caged in an aviary. Then Hurricane Hugo hit the island, and no one has yet determined how many of the wild ones survived. Snyder believes that the situation is "biologically optimistic," but biology is not controlling events anymore; government agencies are. The United States Forest Service, the Puerto Rico Department of Natural Resources, and two divisions of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service have yet to agree on a plan to continue the Puerto Rican Parrot Recovery Program.

Working with the confiscated thick-bills in Arizona, Snyder has found that reestablishing a species may be even harder than rescuing an endangered one. The first thing he had to do to prepare the birds to be free was to splice or glue flight feathers on their wings where trappers had either cut them off or pulled them out. With prosthetic wings in place, the birds were put in big cages with other thick-bills, destined to be their flock mates. There, to encourage them to develop unused or atrophied flight muscles, Snyder put their food (pinecones such as they would find around the release site) on pedestals well below their perches, forcing the birds to maneuver up and down in a flight pattern akin to human beings running in place. It was vital that they be able to fly fast; in the wild,

speed is the main way they escape from hawks. The other thing that keeps them safe is strength of numbers; thick-bills are an extremely social species, and when they were abundant they fed in large groups on the tops of trees, some of the flock serving as sentinels to provide early warning against predators. They are faster than hawks, so if they know one is coming they can escape. But, with only twenty-nine birds destined for release, in two separate groups, they would not have the security of a large flock; speed would be their best protection.

A few birds were fitted with radio collars, and on September 20, 1986, thirteen were released, followed by sixteen a month later. Of those twenty-nine, seven were lost immediately, probably killed by hawks. Eight headed south, toward the Mexican border, and were not seen again. Fourteen stayed in the Chiricahua Mountains, exploring roost sites and feeding areas; in December, they headed northwest, and around New Year's Day they returned to the release area. The next spring, more birds were released, and the flock, now numbering seventeen, again travelled northwest, this time spending the summer in central Arizona. In the fall of 1987, nine of them flew back to the Chiricahuas, occasionally losing members and picking up stragglers along the way, and the following spring the flock migrated again to the northwest. By the summer of 1988, the birds' radio transmitters had gone dead, but while they were in central Arizona a pair nested and successfully produced two chicks—a fact that became known when a light-billed parrot (a light-colored bill is the mark of a fledgling) was spotted among dark-billed adults.

The chicks were a triumph. They meant that the release program had a chance to reestablish the species. But with the radio transmitters out of service Snyder had no way of keeping track of the birds, so, early in 1989, he released one more captive bird, equipped with a radio collar, in the

hope that it would join the flock. The new release was a distinguished individual—the first thick-bill known to have bred in captivity. This parrot, a male, had been held at the San Diego Zoo since being confiscated at the Mexican border, in 1956. He had bred at the zoo from 1965 through 1968 but was probably past breeding age by the time he got to Arizona; he had never been tamed and he could still fly, so he seemed a good candidate for the wild. This parrot readily joined a small flock of three pairs, and his transmitter soon helped Snyder find what he was looking for: the birds' nests, in ponderosa-pine trees in central Arizona. To Snyder's great joy, there turned out to be two nests, both containing eggs, and in September he saw two chicks hatch in each nest. Snyder and Johnson were ecstatic, reporting in the *Thick-Billed Parrot Newsletter*, "As of now, nothing seems likely to reduce the probability of these parrots successfully rearing their young." Reintroduction was working; a lost species had returned.

Then nature interfered. One night in August, a ring-tailed cat managed to climb over a protective aluminum flashing that Snyder had rigged on the trunk of one of the pine trees and killed the nesting male. The mother bird escaped, but the chicks were found dead, probably from hunger. At the other nest, the two adult birds were apparently unable to gather enough food to feed their young, and abandoned them. The remaining members of the diminished flock—two pairs, the widowed female, and the single old male—returned to the Chiricahuas looking for food. Pinecones were scarce there, too, so they turned around and headed north again, for no apparent reason other than the confusion of their hunger, and then returned once more to the Chiricahuas. Biologists observing them noticed that now the old bird was lagging behind. They don't know why; perhaps it was age. By September, he had slowed so much that he could no longer outfly the hawks. He was killed by one, and radio contact with the flock was lost again. "After thirty years in a cage, he did a wonderful job," Snyder said of him. "He helped get us to the nests. He was a hero."

Despite the losses, Snyder is convinced that it is possible to reestablish the thick-billed parrot in the United States. A current problem is that the supply of confiscated smuggled birds



from Mexico has been drying up. Some American zoos have been trying to breed thick-bills, but the parrots' numbers are small, and many of the captive-bred birds are not suitable for reintroduction. They are missing their parrotness. Thick-bills that have been nurtured by caring human beings do not know how to live free; they have not learned all the things that birds seem to learn only when they are raised by other birds, preferably in the wild. Snyder once tried to condition a group of hand-reared thick-bills by keeping them in a cage with wild-caught veterans. When they were set free, they behaved all wrong. Instead of scanning the sky for hawks, the way wild ones always do, they flew up and away, oblivious of danger. They seemed bewildered at not being in a cage, and they flew from tree to tree, purposeless and alone, making no attempt to flock. Although they had been trained to eat pinecones from their food trays, they did not recognize a pinecone on a tree branch; they ate nothing, apparently waiting for someone to feed them, as had happened all their lives. The day after their release, the experiment was ended when it became obvious that these birds would not survive. Getting them back was simple: when they were shown their familiar food trays, they flew down and let themselves be caught, relieved to be safe once again in the hands of their human captors. It has never been easy to keep parrots in cages, but keeping them wild is going to be much harder.

—JANE AND MICHAEL STERN

COUNTRY LUNCH

A feast in the time of plague—
That's the way it feels:
This rich food on the table,
This festive company
Of flushed, dreamy faces.

In the shade of a big old tree,
In the heat of the afternoon,
When the flies grow sluggish
And the head begins to spin with wine,
The women bare their breasts,
The men sit naked to the waist.

Everyone suddenly so beautiful.
Even the girl lying on the ground
Shaking with laughter,
Whose nose has started to bleed.

—CHARLES SIMIC

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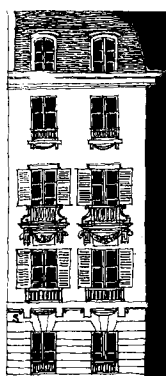


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Y. Karsh

THE ART WORLD

Blue Skies

FOR the past decade, many people in New York have believed that the most important spiritual artist working in America is James Turrell—a belief that, appropriately enough, has had to be taken almost entirely on faith, since Turrell's work has been nearly invisible here during all that time. People think of Turrell as a religious or spiritual artist not because he paints scenes of saints' lives or gives his works Biblical names but because he seems able to manipulate ordinary elements—a frameless window, an electric bulb, a skylight—and fill rooms with light in a way that creates for the visitor the experience of heightened emotion, even of ecstatic revelation, which in the past was always associated with the mystic's cave rather than with the museum's walls.

Turrell's reputation in New York rests largely on the memory of a single retrospective exhibition, "James Turrell: Light and Space," held at the Whitney in the fall of 1980, and in particular on a single installation in

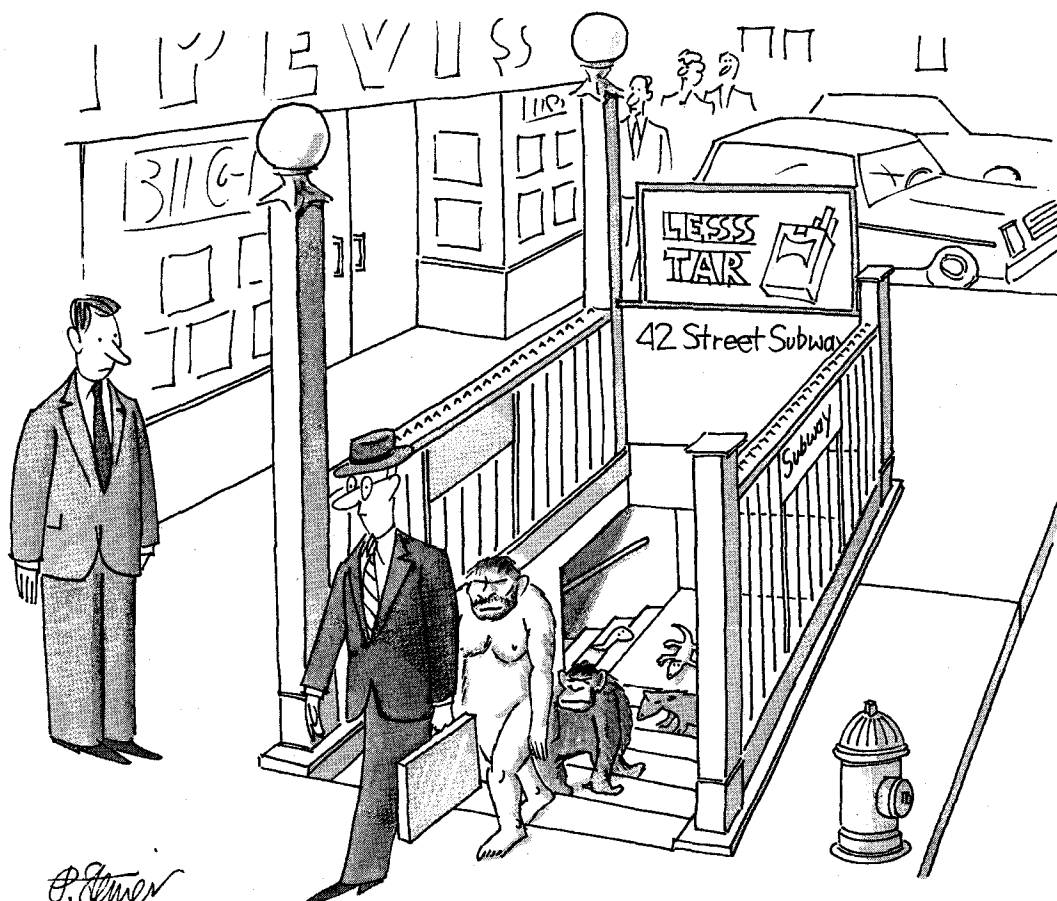
that exhibition. The installation was called "Laar," and it was an example of what Turrell (who shrewdly prefers to discuss his work in the cool, dry, uninflected vocabulary of the engineer) calls an "aperture piece." At the Whitney, you left the elevator and saw, across a darkened room, what appeared to be a big monochromatic painting hanging on the far wall—a canvas, about the size of a Barnett Newman "zip," painted in Whistlerian, gas-lamp gray. As you approached it, though, the gray curtain began somehow to vibrate, as if a scrim had been inserted between the painting and your mental image of it. As you drew closer, you realized that it wasn't a canvas at all but an open window: what only a moment before had seemed a slick, shining low-relief object turned out to be a well of fog. It was as if light, which we normally experience as a secondary quality—something reflected from a mirror or streaming through a window—had been *bottled*, like perfume in an atomizer. (What Turrell

had done was to define the "approach space" with direct light from four seventy-watt tungsten bulbs mounted and pointed at the side walls, while lighting the rectangular aperture entirely by indirect, "ambient" light; this arrangement created two different yet seemingly continuous perceptual spaces, and the moment when the scrim appeared between the real and mental images marked the line between them.)

There were other mysterious, disarming installations: an illusory white cube projected into the corner of a gallery; a room where one wall was dematerialized by light, so that it appeared to float; still other rooms flooded by beautiful pink and blue fluorescence. In a sense, it was all just mood lighting, but the mood evoked was that of revelation. Like any visionary experience, though, it had to be experienced firsthand; other people's testimony to its effects just sounded spacey. "Wordlessly ecstatic experiences," "We can once again glimpse our transcendence"—this kind of language came, almost unwillingly, out of the mouths of critics. More important, amateur museumgoers seemed to respond to this art emotionally, in a way that had long since ceased to be a part

of their reaction to the diagrammatic offerings of the avant-garde. I got a letter from the most hard-boiled skeptic I know, who had stopped caring about contemporary art somewhere around the time of the bare-bricks-and-plywood-boxes movement: she wrote that she had come away from the show convinced that Turrell was working with exactly the same light that, as she put it, "Dorothy and William Wordsworth had seen, shivering on the lawn at Grasmere."

Turrell was no mysterious man, and it wasn't hard to find out about his background and education: that he came from California, and had majored in psy-



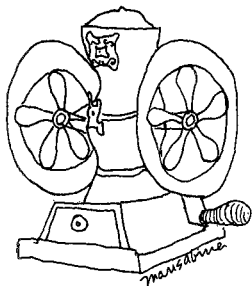
chology at Pomona College; that in the sixties he had been one of the artists clustered around Robert Irwin, the magus of California perceptual art; that he had spent nine years in a studio in Ocean Park, near Santa Monica, blocking off doors and windows so that the light came in only through a series of small slits that projected the movement of life outside onto a white wall in serene, abstract patterns; and that he had declined to enter the gallery-dealer system (what did he have to sell?) and made his living as an aerial cartographer. The story of Turrell's art even came complete with a wonderful origin legend.

As a young art student in California, the story went, Turrell had fallen in love with the American abstract paintings that were projected in the classroom day after day. When he got to New York, however, and rushed to the museums to look at the originals, he had been forced to admit to what is probably the guilty secret of many art students: he liked looking at incandescent slides of paintings in darkened rooms better than he liked looking at paintings. He realized that what really interested him wasn't painting but projected light, and he began to make his art out of that material.

If there was an element of independent-minded, "Mr. Deeds Goes to the Guggenheim" honesty about this revelation, it was possible to see a glimmer of old-fashioned art-historical logic in it, too. What could be a more appealing outcome of the American luminist tradition, which had begun in the Hudson River landscape and then evolved into the abstract illuminations of Rothko and Newman, than that it should end by making art out of light itself?

Around the time of the Whitney exhibition, Turrell found that he had enough money to begin work on what he intended to be his masterpiece: the creation of a celestial observatory within an extinct volcano in Arizona. (He received a MacArthur Fellowship in the mid-eighties, and he has as a patron Count Panza, the Lorenzo de' Medici of minimalism.) The volcano is called Roden Crater, and it sits on the eastern edge of the San Francisco volcanic plateau; Turrell discovered it when he was doing an aerial survey in 1975. He

is reshaping the crater bowl into a big geometric dish—it has a diameter of three thousand feet—with a clean, even rim. Though still incomplete, the Roden Crater project has been open to the occasional visitor over the last few years, and when it is finished anyone who wants to will be able to make a pilgrimage. Standing inside the modified crater and looking up, visitors are

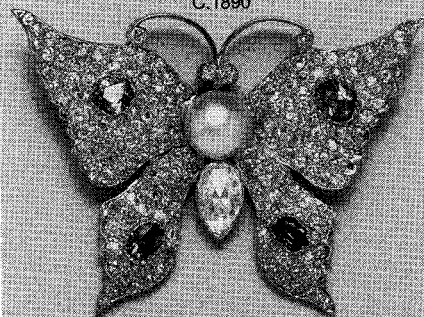


supposed to have a heightened experience of the perceptual illusion called "celestial vaulting"—the tendency of the eye to see the sky as a solid dome, rather than as a vast, shapeless expanse. As you enter the crater, after walking through a thousand-foot-long tunnel, the sky at first will look like a bowl of light cupped directly on top of the rim of the crater; then, as you walk up the sides of the wall of the crater, the sky will spring outward toward the farthest horizon on the flat landscape, so that a second, two-hundred-mile-wide bowl will seem to be enclosing the Arizona desert. Turrell has also been burrowing out a lot of underground chambers inside the volcano, and each one will create a different spatial illusion.

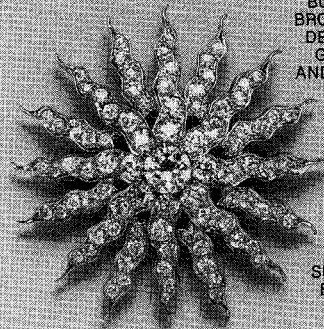
Turrell has succeeded in maintaining an aura of expectation and enormous mystery around this project. Fragmentary reports on how close it is to being finished and what being inside it is like leak back to New York only rarely, and they have some of the rapt, not quite credible quality of medieval travellers' tales about the kingdom of Prester John. There has been only one gallery or museum exhibition of Turrell's work in New York since 1980, and the one permanent installation by him in the city—a piece called "Meeting," which sits, open to the sky, on top of P.S. 1, in Queens—was out of commission for most of the last few years. ("Meeting" has a lid, and it couldn't keep out the rain.)

A FEW months ago, Turrell returned to Manhattan just long enough to install three aperture pieces at the SteinGladstone gallery, on Wooster Street, and to refurbish "Meeting." (Later this summer, a show of his prints will go on exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art.) Where ten years ago Turrell's work

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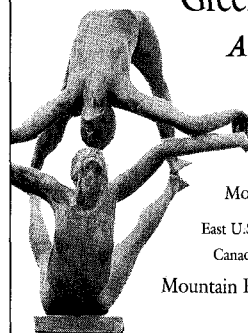
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had held out the promise of a renewal and extension of American abstraction—the promise of a new kind of minimalism, theatrical where most minimalism had been rhetorical, and warm where it had mostly been cold—at the end of the decade his work conveyed a stubborn, isolated other-worldliness. As it happened, the pieces installed at SteinGladstone were a little disappointing. Downstairs at the gallery, there was, hidden behind a special partition, a new piece in the style of "Laar," rendered with mauve instead of gray light; upstairs were two vertical aperture pieces, one aqua and one sky blue. Though the perceptual illusion was as arresting and as mysterious as ever, the "Miami Vice" colors gave both pieces a diminutive, jewel-box quality. In place of the revelatory dreaminess of the old pieces, the new ones offered only a boutique, prêt-à-porter numinousness. One couldn't help feeling that this was essentially a rote, benefit performance, intended to help in the apparently endless fundraising effort for the Roden Crater project. (Architectural drawings were placed on sale, at hefty prices.)

The refurbished "Meeting" is another story, and a much better one. "Meeting" is open Wednesday through Friday from an hour before sunset until an hour after, and you have to make a reservation to visit. The subject of "Meeting," as the hours suggest, is the way the sky looks at sunset, and its materials consist of a rectangular aperture cut into the roof of the building—a kind of skylight without any sort of frame and without any covering glass—above a square white room; shallow veneered-plywood benches rimming the room's four walls; and faint tangerine-colored floodlights concealed behind the benches. Because the aperture is continuous with the roof, it offers no depth clues, so the sky above it seems to have settled down directly overhead, like a blue silk canopy. In the early evening, while the sun is still relatively high, the experience is peaceful but a little monotonous. Distant commercial buzzes and hums rise from the street and descend from the skies. The rectangular aperture soon becomes a frame; you can manipulate objects in the sky by moving around inside the white room. When the moon comes out, you can treat it like a movable decal or like a collage element—you move the moon around, *control* it,

as though you were holding it on the end of a very long stick. When air traffic goes by—a helicopter, or a jet approaching LaGuardia—it crosses the perfectly framed space as if it were part of a purposeful design.

As the sun begins to set, the tangerine-colored lights, which have been held at a steady low level of illumination, and are therefore, even at dusk, hardly visible at all, suddenly begin to make the white walls glow—first orange and then candlelight yellow. This all-over color gradually intensifies, by contrast, the darkening color of the sky above, until the evening sky itself seems to glow a deep, intense blue that has been seen before only in dreams and crayon boxes: an almost purple blue that seems to rest, like an enamelled surface, directly above your head. The moon within that sky seems not silver but hot white, like a pearl laid on velvet. The experience is more beautiful than sublime. It does not provide any shiver of eternity; instead, in "Meeting" the night sky is placed for a little while under gentle control, and is shaped and composed. In the eighteenth century, people would travel around with picture frames and amber glasses, and hold them up to look at landscapes, so that what they saw looked like a Claude or a Poussin. The orchestrated effects in "Meeting" are perhaps the highly serious descendants of that kind of recreation.

SOME people who have visited "Meeting" say that they find the experience moving, and even profound, but also irritatingly lofty—too high-minded, and too blandly indifferent to the real life of getting and spending which is going on in the New York streets below. A case could be made, I suppose, that Turrell's work is simply Windham Hill music for the eyes—a kind of neutral, soothing wash of color and light, puffed up with New Age spirituality. Even some people who admire Turrell see his work, and particularly his Roden Crater project, as expressing a Thoreau-like rejection of a debased society—a rearguard, last-gasp transcendentalism. (Suzi Gablik, one of Turrell's most intense admirers, wrote about his work that it allows us again to "experience states of consciousness beyond the limiting patterns built up by the socio-cultural environment," and that "for most artists the choice has been to remain entangled in

our disillusionment, rather than, as with Turrell, to advance to the frontier where we can once again glimpse our transcendence.")

Yet Turrell is really a vernacular artist, far more deeply in touch with the materials and experiences of the mass society that surrounds him than are almost any of those contemporaries of his who make much more ostentatiously "entangled" art. His means—the projector and the rheostat and the diorama window—are the common, banal repertoire of high-school science. The light of his work is sometimes natural, sometimes artificial; one of his purposes is to erase such distinctions. ("I don't have a preference between existing and 'artificial' light," he has said. "There isn't any real difference. . . . Whether you burn hydrogen, a piece of wood, or tungsten wire, the light reveals what the material is. . . . It is all 'natural' light.") The light on a lectern which creates different spaces for the lecturer and his audience, the holiday floodlights on the tops of skyscrapers, the rippling illumination rising from a swimming pool at night—these everyday experiences act as the seed of Turrell's refined and seemingly otherworldly installations. If his work has a mission, it is, in a sense, to aestheticize those already available experiences. The analogues that Turrell often uses to explain his work are taken from the realm of engineering: the way a stereo creates a space of its own, say, and the way the world looks from an airplane. In fact, if there is an empirical experience at the heart of Turrell's work, it is surely the contemporary desert seen from on high—the vast expanse of color broken by the elegant rectangles of runways and dams and testing grounds.

There is a natural temptation to see Turrell as an heir to American luminism, with its transcendentalist impulses and its deification of nature. What could come closer to Emerson's image of God—the "bright, oblong blur"—than a Turrell aperture? But in that Emersonian tradition the emotional emphasis has always been anti-material and mystical. (Perhaps this is why the tradition is so easily blended into the Jewish mysticism of Rothko and Newman.) If Turrell's work is rooted in any American tradition, it is surely in a pragmatic rejection of transcendentalism, in the belief that the mystic's white light and ecstasies are

not dim apprehensions of another realm but experiences as real and as open to investigation as eating and sleeping and breathing. It is an expression of the peculiarly American (and perhaps particularly Californian) faith that religious experience is, above all, immediately available. Perhaps Turrell's real predecessors in American art are not so much the lonely and angst-ridden New York painters as the California Modern architects; Richard Neutra's picture-window-filled houses, with their attempt to achieve an equilibrium between an enveloping light and a serene interior, underlie Turrell's installations.

In Europe, the clean, white, light-filled room always has a suggestion of the utilitarian and industrial. In America, with our Quaker and Shaker traditions, the same interior has always had instead an edge of spiritualism; that edge lives on in Turrell's art. Turrell's work begins with the belief that religious or transcendent experiences are just there, empirical facts like any others, and can be willed into existence with a little ingenuity—a vision of the Absolute which can be rigged to a dimmer switch and kept open evenings for an hour on each side of sunset. This kind of American spirituality is, of course, a licensed subject for satire, but is it necessarily absurd? In the only really original American book about religious experiences, William James a century ago tried to dispense with thousands of years of theological speculation by insisting that mystical visions should be studied not as revelations of deeper meaning but as typical human experiences, and that the only available criterion for judging their truth would always be their "immediate luminousness."

—ADAM GOPNIK

Two glitches were made in the Old Style Corn Chowder recipe submitted by Joe Green of the Sail Loft for the May 24 Wooden Spoon column. First, add one big onion, not one bag of onions. Second . . .

—Swampscott (Mass.) Reporter.

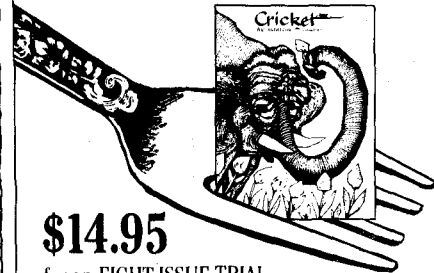
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THE CURRENT CINEMA

Survivor

FOR the first half hour or so of "Quick Change," Bill Murray is dressed as a clown. He's just about the last comedian we'd expect to see with floppy shoes and a red nose. His cool, mocking, offhand style is the antithesis of the clown ethic, which is much too aggressive for him, too ingratiating, too abject. And he's certainly not interested in pathos. He's not laughing on the outside or crying on the inside; he's doing what he always does—looking at the world with a heavy-lidded give-me-a-break expression and keeping up a running commentary on the idiocies around him. The getup, as we discover within minutes of the movie's opening, is purely functional: he's robbing a bank, and this is his disguise. To Murray's character, Grimm, a fed-up New York City bureaucrat who's trying to get enough money to leave the crumbling city forever, looking like a fool is a small price to pay for the possibility of freedom. The indignities of urban life have worn him down to the point where he's beyond caring about anything but escape; besides, this humiliating Bozo suit sort of expresses how the city makes him feel every day.

The movie doesn't worry more than it has to about the character's psychology; actually, we don't learn anything about his background until the robbery is over. While Grimm is in the bank, threatening hostages and telephoning ludicrous demands to the chief of police (Jason Robards), "Quick Change" is content to get most of its laughs from the incongruity of Murray's smart-aleck patter and his stupid outfit. But even in these early scenes the picture isn't all Murray's show. The hostages, pleading for their lives and bickering among themselves, have their moments, too. An impeccably dressed yuppie offers the clown his twelve-thousand-dollar watch in exchange for freedom; as Jack Gilpin plays him, with a self-satisfied air and an insinuating voice, this is the most revolting young corporate smoothie you'll ever see. There's a big, bearded coward, who whines "We're all gonna die" and

vomits into a glove; he's hilarious, and after a couple of scenes we recognize the wonderful actor Randy Quaid behind the facial hair. (This character turns out to be an accomplice to the crime.) And the elderly bank guard, tough-talking but thoroughly ineffective, is played by Bob Elliott, the surviving member of the great comedy team Bob and Ray. Bald and bland-looking, Elliott uses his alert eyes, the grim set of his mouth, and his absolutely flat speaking voice to miraculous comic effect. His character here is a mild man who thinks he sounds fierce; his

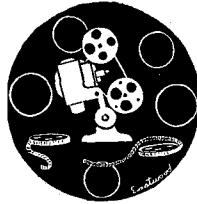
discourse consists of pithy one-liners that seem to have been borrowed from cop shows and old gangster movies. Warning the other hostages that their captor is approaching, he says, "Can it, here comes Clarabelle." Later, while giving his statement to the police, he deadpans the most outrageous lies about his actions during the robbery: "Then I said, 'It's all over, Chuckles.' . . . That's when he cold-cocked me." No one else could deliver these lines the way Bob Elliott does. His time onscreen can't add up to more than ten minutes, but every moment is pure joy; there's not much he doesn't know about comic understatement, and watching this performance is like sitting in on a master class.

The casting of actors like Elliott (who has appeared in very few movies) in supporting roles is what makes "Quick Change" work. Murray coproduced (with Robert Greenhut) and co-directed (with Howard Franklin) this picture, and, although it's clearly a vehicle for him, he's actually less dominating than he was in the vehicles created for him by others—"Stripes" and the "Ghostbusters" movies and "Scrooged." His attitude, wised-up and casual, holds the movie together, but he gives the other actors plenty of room, and many of them get brilliant bits of shtick to sink their teeth into. His direction is an extension of his performing style: he's so relaxed and sure of his effects that he doesn't even care if he's upstaged every now and then. This is, to say the least, a rare quality

in a comedian (and unheard of in a clown).

After Grimm has ditched his disguise and left the bank, under the noses of the police, the movie turns into a series of skits on the routine horrors of New York City. Grimm and his gang, which consists of his girlfriend (Geena Davis) and Quaid, have to make their way from midtown to Kennedy Airport, and everything goes wrong: they get lost because the expressway signs are missing, and mugged when they ask for directions; their car is wrecked by the Fire Department, and when they finally manage to flag down a cab the driver speaks no English; a scrupulous bus driver won't accept a hundred-dollar bill to take them to the airport—exact change only. Fundamentally, all these mishaps are the stuff of conventional caper comedy, which is not, these days, a very vital genre. (The screenplay, by Franklin, is based on a novel by Jay Cronley.) But most of them are funny, because they're tossed off quickly and new characters keep coming at us. The cabdriver (Tony Shalhoub), who speaks a Middle Eastern language no one can identify, is totally out of it but terribly eager to please: a real comic nightmare. The bus driver (Philip Bosco), whom Grimm accuses of being "Ralph Kramden's evil twin," is a splendid caricature of a certain kind of city employee, clinging to rules and schedules with infuriating tenacity. At one point, Grimm and his accomplices duck through a doorway and find themselves in a warehouse full of small-time mobsters, one of whom is a lisping, cringing gungel—a sublimely silly cameo by Stanley Tucci (who a couple of seasons ago played the oily capo Pinzolo on "Wiseguy"). And in the larger supporting roles Quaid, Davis, and Robards all get, and take full advantage of, their opportunities to make us laugh.

The action—and the acting—in "Quick Change" is often wild, but one of the reasons the picture is so pleasing is that it has a core of sanity. It knows what it is, which is nothing much, and what it does best, which is observing strange behavior in familiar settings. It doesn't force itself on us, so even when a joke falls flat we remain in a good mood. As the movie ends, a brisk eighty-eight minutes after its opening shot, it's clear that Bill Murray has, as usual, survived everything: New York



City, the hazards of producing and directing, even the clown suit. In its modest way, the movie is a lesson: if you keep your wits about you and stay alert to absurdity, you never have to be anybody's fool.

ANDREW BERGMAN'S "The Freshman" is a far more strenuous comedy. It jumps right out at you, honks its horn, squirts water in your face, does backflips—it wears its zaniness on its sleeve. Bergman is a clever writer, full of off-the-wall notions, which he works into elaborate farce plots: he's Mel Brooks with structure. (He was one of the writers of Brooks' "Blazing Saddles"; he also wrote "The In-Laws" and wrote and directed "So Fine.") All the movies he's worked on have funny things in them, but they're all marred, in varying degrees, by overinsistence: they keep telling us how outrageous they are and what a great time we're having, and we're rarely allowed to respond freely—to catch a comic detail out of the corner of our eye. Early in "The Freshman," the hero, Clark (Matthew Broderick), a quiet young man from Vermont, who has just entered the N.Y.U. film school, walks into a social club in Little Italy and sees on one of the walls a huge framed photograph of Mussolini. Not a subtle gag, but good for a chuckle. Bergman, however, is so pleased with this touch that he turns it into a choke hold: he has Broderick do a double take and then, a few minutes later, ask one of the patrons if that picture is really who he thinks it is. By then, the director's elbow is so far into our ribs it's practically coming out the other side; we're almost ashamed of having laughed at the tiny joke in the first place.

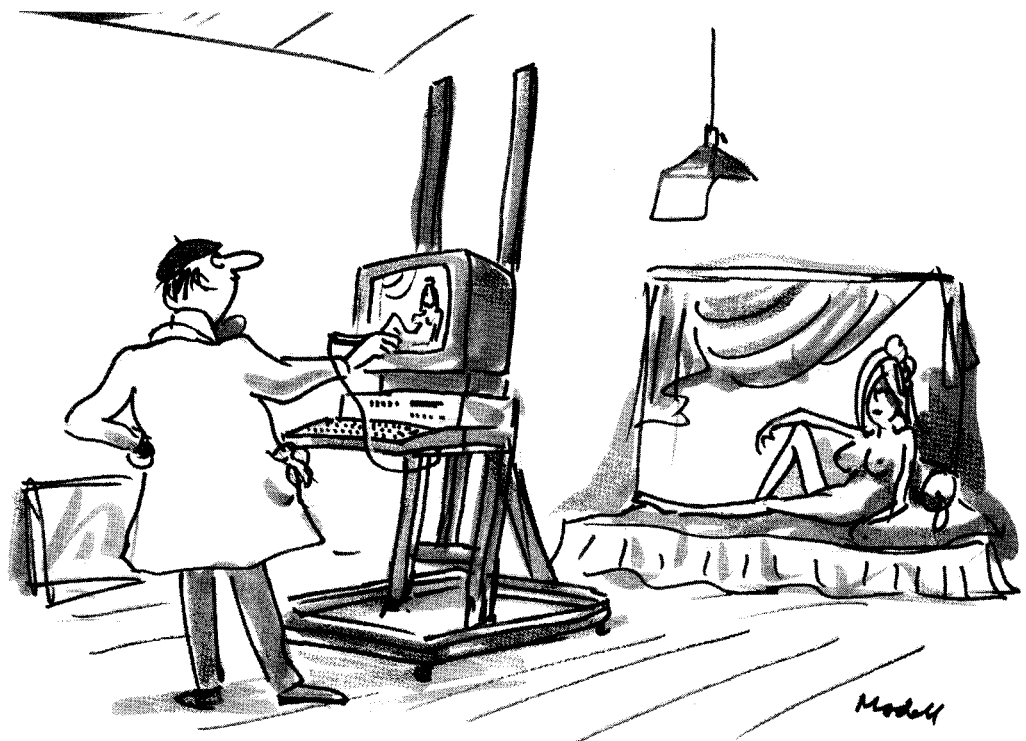
To be fair, the movie is occasionally as funny as it believes it is. Bergman writes the same story over and over, and it's a serviceable one: a reserved middle-class guy is plunked down in an unfamiliar and dangerous subculture. In "The In-Laws," Alan Arkin is a dentist led astray by a rogue C.I.A. operative (Peter Falk), whose son his daughter is marrying, and he winds up dodging bullets on a Caribbean island. The college professor played by Ryan O'Neal in "So Fine" finds

himself working in the garment trade and running for his life from a hulking mobster. The hero of "The Freshman" is, within a few days of arriving in New York, making deliveries for an "importer" named Carmine Sabatini (Marlon Brando) and being treated like a member of Sabatini's family (or Family); Carmine's daughter (Penelope Ann Miller) has told her father that she wants to marry Clark, and the old man embraces him, with alarming enthusiasm, as "the son I never had." The key to Bergman's sense of humor is that the denizens of each movie's alien culture always act as if their way of life were the most natural thing in the world: the hero is sweating and shaking and looking for the nearest exit, and the people around him can't figure out what he's so upset about.

In "The Freshman" Bergman has actors who play his sort of material to perfection. Penelope Ann Miller and Bruno Kirby, as Carmine's fast-talking weaselly nephew, are hilariously unfazed by the family's criminal activities, and Matthew Broderick calibrates his reactions with remarkable comic dexterity: Clark is constantly flustered, but Broderick never overdoes his panic or his incredulity, so he doesn't become tiresome. And the movie has Brando, who seems to be in a bizarre and wonderful world of his own. When he's onscreen, he makes Bergman look like a genius. Brando's first few scenes, in

which he's seated, a massive presence, at a special table in the social club, are lit (by William A. Fraker) in the rich brown tones of Gordon Willis's cinematography for "The Godfather"; people in the movie keep staring at him and commenting on his resemblance to Don Corleone. Brando plays along, parodying himself marvellously. All the Godfather trademarks are trotted out: the whispery voice, the noble tilt of the head, the delicate, courtly gestures of the hands. It's a spectacular turn. His effects are timed with Jack Benny precision, and they're always surprising: every joke arrives like a little gift, individually wrapped. In his scenes the movie seems less frantic; its lunacy takes on an air of serenity—a deeper, more inexplicable, and much funnier weirdness. Brando's performance begins as parody and gradually, almost imperceptibly, transcends its jokey origins; Carmine Sabatini develops from a revue-sketch version of Vito Corleone into a real and strangely original character.

It's worth putting up with Andrew Bergman's overemphatic approach to comedy for the pleasure of watching Brando. And for a few other things: Paul Benedict as an archetypal film-school professor, a smug weenie who writes articles like "And the Wheels Go Slow: Form and Function in '42nd Street'" and raptly lip-synchs the dialogue of the movies he shows in class;



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A d v e r t i s e m e n t

Bert Parks belting out "Tequila" and Dylan's sardonic "Maggie's Farm" at a formal dinner. When Bergman's jokes are good, they're sensational; when they're not so good, he repeats them again and again, as if they would become funnier through familiarity. Casting Brando is probably the greatest comic inspiration he has ever had. It's a joke he'll never be able to repeat, but, if he compares the way the humor bubbles up and flows in Brando's scenes with the way the rest of "The Freshman" sputters, he could learn something from it.

"GHOST" sounds like a horror movie, but it's a romantic fairy tale. The scariest thing about it is its shamelessness. A young New York bank executive, Sam (Patrick Swayze), is killed, on the street, at a moment in his life when everything seems to be going his way. He and his beautiful, talented, loving girlfriend, Molly (Demi Moore), have just moved into a huge, airy loft, which they've remodelled and furnished themselves; we've seen them, in dreamy dust-and-sunlight shots, share the yuppie bliss of knocking out walls. He makes a Wall Street salary, she's a ceramics artist on the verge of recognition, and they're nice, unassuming folks: we understand that they're happy and affluent because they *deserve* to be—they haven't done anything piggy or unpleasant to get where they are. Not long before his death, Sam, a reflective sort, tells Molly, "I just don't want the bubble to burst. Whenever something good in my life happens, I'm afraid I'm gonna lose it." She reassures him: "You live a charmed life." Getting killed lets some of the air out of his tires, but people who have it all can't be expected to disappear just like that; Sam sticks around, as a spirit (and Swayze stays onscreen, as a body). He attends his funeral—thus acting out a popular daydream of the self-absorbed—and then watches Molly, who can't see or hear him, drift grief-stricken through the spiffy loft. These images of death have a soothing banality, like a greeting-card message from the world beyond.

Although Sam is dead, he has plenty to do; he's a spirit on the go. The screenwriter, Bruce Joel Rubin, and the director, Jerry Zucker, have given him the task of protecting Molly from the people who killed him. (He has

learned that his death was not a random street crime, as it had appeared, but a premeditated murder, and that the information he was killed for is still in Molly's possession.) Through a reluctant psychic (Whoopi Goldberg), he tries to communicate with his girlfriend; later, an experienced ghost (Vincent Schiavelli) teaches him how to move objects and break stuff. Sam saves Molly and then twinkles off ruefully. (Even in death, he's upwardly mobile—climbing the spiritual ladder.) In this movie, death is treated as if it were merely a form of disability, one of those handicaps we've seen people struggle bravely with in TV movies—something for the individual to triumph over, with will power, hard work, and love.

This creamy-toned fantasy certainly pushes the audience's emotional buttons; watching it, you feel like a VCR that's being programmed by experts. "Ghost" is a twentysomething hybrid of "It's a Wonderful Life" and some of the gooier, more solemn episodes of "The Twilight Zone." It's designed to make us misty-eyed about our middle-class comforts, our loved ones, and—preëminently—ourselves. There's not a trace of wit or irony in it; if there were, the filmmakers' bubble would burst. Zucker, who co-directed "Airplane!" and "The Naked Gun," lays on the sentiment here as uninhibitedly as he sprayed gags at us in his previous pictures. Perhaps the best example of his approach is the movie's climactic romantic image—of Molly dancing with Sam, as if he were still alive, to their favorite song, the Righteous Brothers' record of "Unchained Melody." The filmmakers have set this moment up by having the psychic allow Sam's spirit to enter her body, so he can touch Molly through her. Although it's much too late in the picture for us to expect anything interesting, our hopes, irrationally, flare up for an instant. Is Zucker about to present us with an image of Demi Moore caressing, perhaps kissing, Whoopi Goldberg? (In an earlier scene in which a ghost took possession of the psychic's body, Goldberg remained onscreen.) Not likely. The director passes up the chance for a funny, daring shot, and gives us the shining yuppie couple swaying in each other's arms instead. Some unseen power has intervened here, and it's not one of the higher ones.

—TERRENCE RAFFERTY

MUSICAL EVENTS

Louisan Adventures

DVOŘÁK's last years, after his return from America, in 1895, were occupied largely with opera. He revised "The Jacobin" (1897) and then composed "The Devil and Kate" (1898-99), "Rusalka" (1900), and "Armida" (1902-3). The lovely "Rusalka," a version of the Little Mermaid or Undine tale, is the only one performed internationally with some frequency. (The elegant English National production, set in an Edwardian nursery, where incestuous undertones prompt the drama of fated love, is available on videotape.) The others are heard from time to time and are cherished, as is all Dvořák's music, for the rich flow of unaffected lyricism, for naturalness and ease. He lacked Smetana's dramatic vividness, ambition, and urgency, and lacked Janáček's unconventional directness and genius. He was a less original composer than either of those compatriots. From Brahms he had learned technical mastery, and study of Wagner influenced his orchestral textures and motivic transformations. He commanded what the authors of "The Record Guide" sum up as "a clean, logical harmony; a rich, homophonic melodiousness; a virile rhetoric in the larger symphonic forms; and . . . those fresh and homely emotions (he paints in the sunny out-of-doors, a canvas on which the sun is shining) which are the expression of a happy simple nature deriving at no far remove from peasant stock." He has "an idealism more all-embracing than lofty, a robust tenderness, a blunt humour, a purely musical wit, a conventional sense of tragedy (his serious operas are not strikingly successful), a gentle nostalgia replacing the exquisite (this was not in his make-up), and a large sweet sadness."

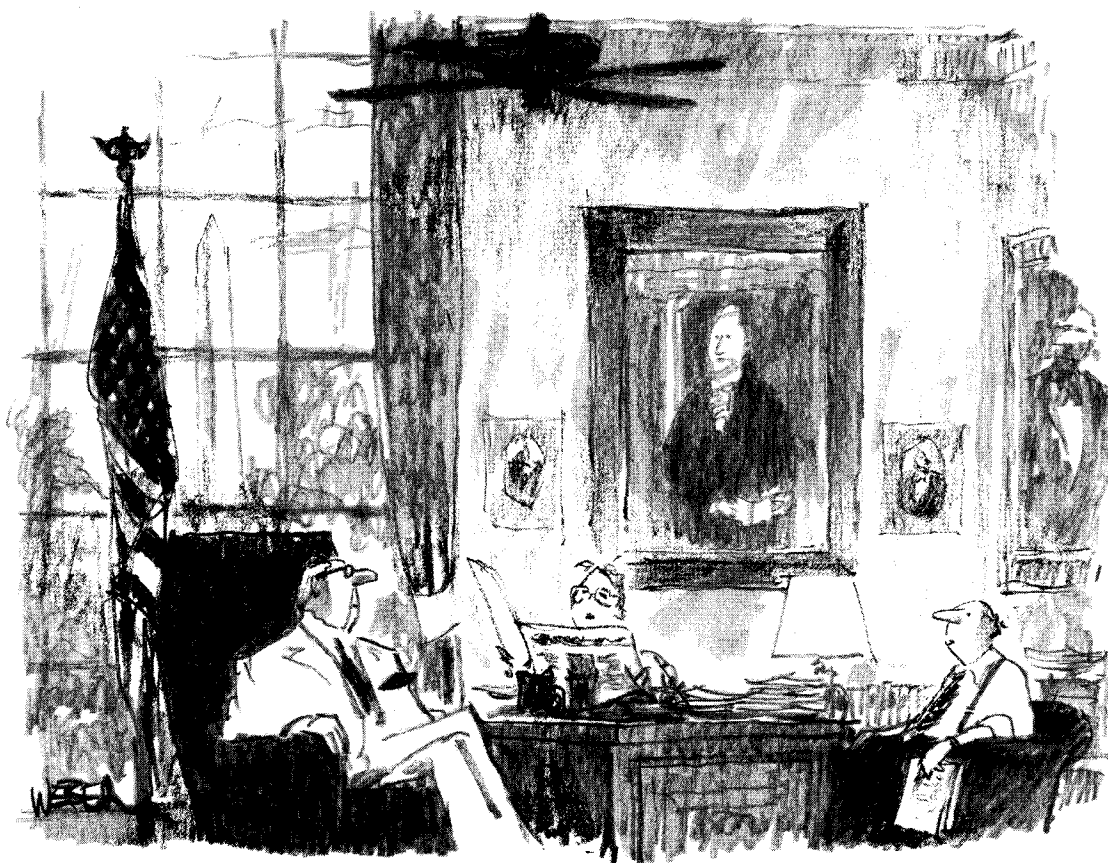
These are not the extravagant virtues that fire the champions of a Berlioz or a Janáček; one can hear no Dvořák for a year and not feel the want. Then, encountering a work of his again, one responds with warmth, gratitude, and enthusiasm to music so sane, sound, balanced, and lovable.

The centenary of Dvořák's arrival in New York to direct the new National Conservatory of Music and found an American school of composition falls in 1992, and 1991 is the sesquicentennial of his birth. No doubt there will be abundant celebrations. The University of New Orleans has already announced a sesquicentennial festival and conference. And last month the Opera Theatre of St. Louis presented "The Devil and Kate." It is a comic opera based on a Czech folk tale. In an age of active nationalism, Dvořák found a subject in which the people could be triumphant. The synopsis accompanying the 1958 Supraphon recording of the opera begins:

The action of this very popular Dvořák opera takes place in a village whose houses

are grouped around the castle of a feudal lord, in this case a princess who living from the proceeds of the arduous labour of her serfs spends most of her life in social functions, hunting and *dolce-far-niente*. She entrusted the management of her large estate to a steward intensely disliked by all the people for his brutal and merciless manner of a slave-driver.

But "The Devil and Kate" is a jollier affair than that would suggest. The Princess does not appear until Act III. The heroine, Kate, is a village maiden so plain, plump, and, above all, garrulous that no one wants to dance with her, and even the devil Marbuel forgoes his designs rather than find himself saddled with her. Act I plays in and around the village inn, Act II in Hell, and Act III in the castle. Jirka, the hero, is a clever shepherd who strikes a bargain with his employer, the Princess: if she will abolish serfdom, he will save her when Marbuel comes to claim her for Hell; he does so by threatening Marbuel with Kate's company. Serfdom is abolished; Kate is rewarded with a fine house and much money (so now she will not lack suitors); Jirka is appointed chief minister; and the opera ends with a chorus in praise of the Princess. The subject, like that of "The Taming of the Shrew" and that



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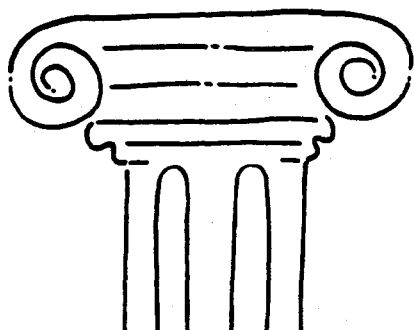
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of Rameau's "Platée" (whose heroine is a nymph so ugly that all make sport of her), has today its unpleasing aspects, but it is treated with such good humor that any cross objection to it seems somewhat misplaced: the tale of the devil and the shrew has its roots deep in folklore, and therefore in human nature. In a program-book essay Michael Beckerman points out analogies with the Appalachian folk song "The Farmer's Curs't Wife" (and writes briefly but suggestively about the influence of America on the later Dvořák). "The Devil and Kate" charmed me when first I heard it, many years ago, and charmed me again on the Supraphon recording. If the St. Louis performance, which was directed by Francesca Zambello and conducted by Richard Buckley, proved less delightful, it was only because lyricism had been sacrificed to rumbustiousness. I have never heard a chorus so boisterously eager as that of St. Louis—whether playing peasants or demons—to stamp, to shout, to rollick, to drown the music with cries of "Hurrah!", "Whoops-a-daisy!", whatever. It was as if everyone concerned feared that the unfamiliar opera would flag if there were an instant of quietness or relaxation. By the end of the evening, one felt battered. Phyllis Pancella's Kate had verve. Joseph Evans' Jirka was prosaic of timbre. Eugene Perry's devil offered some amusing moments. Although Alexandra Coku, the Princess, had lost her voice on the evening I went, she traced the lines of her aria—a moving number that looks forward to "Rusalka"—expressively. Many a modern singer sounds more musical, more delicately artistic, when "marking" than when in full vocal flood, but there was something about Miss Coku's phrasing to suggest that she might be well worth hearing when in health.

ST. LOUIS is an attractive city. During its annual opera season—a summer festival in all but name—one can hear works new and old performed by young American artists who have been inspired to give of their best. Ashley Putnam, Jerry Hadley, Dawn Upshaw, Vinson Cole, Thomas Hampson, Sylvia McNair are among the singers now famous whose early

performances I heard in St. Louis. The operas are played in a small theatre, holding under a thousand, and are sung in English: the artists communicate directly with their audiences, and opera can become apprehensible, important drama—something more serious than the exotic and sometimes absurd entertainment to which the Met and the City Opera so often aspire.

And besides the Opera Theatre of St. Louis there is the city itself, whose architectural richness and variety prove inexhaustible. The 1911 Britannica tells of "exceptionally fine residential streets that are accounted among the handsomest in the world" and of "a park system . . . among the finest in the country." They are there still, handsomest and finest. There are the great Botanical Gardens, the rich Art Museum, the famous Zoo.



And much else: Saarinen's soul-elevating Arch, stunning churches and temples old and new, Theodore Link's vast and picturesque station. There is a house by H. H. Richardson (now the offices of the bartenders' union), a skyscraper by Louis Sullivan, a ceiling by Noguchi in the U-Haul Moving Center. The Symphony plays in a 1926 movie palace by Rapp & Rapp, which was modelled on Versailles. (St. Louis, named for Louis IX, was founded under Louis XV.) Across the street is the "fabulous" Fox, C. Howard Crane's 1929 extravaganza in his "Siamese-Byzantine" manner. This is a city to be traversed with open eyes, and civic enterprise is bringing new life to its once jaded areas. Each year—I have been visiting St. Louis, with enthusiasm undiminished, for fourteen years—offers fresh discoveries. My discovery this year was Cahokia Mounds, an Indian metropolis across the Mississippi, in Illinois, which flourished from 900 to 1400. Once it was North America's most populous city, surpassed only centuries later, by Philadelphia. Today, it is a romantic and beautiful park, studded with grassy mounds. As one ascends the largest of them—an earthwork bulkier than Egypt's Great Pyramid—modern St. Louis, with its Arch and its skyscrapers, becomes visible across the river, and thoughts of ephemerality fill the mind. One of the paths through Cahokia takes in the runway of an airport long since aban-

doned, now reclaimed and overgrown by verdant nature, overflowed by ducks from the adjacent marsh, a haunt of hares. Even air transport has receded into archeology. It was Midsummer Day, and the sun had risen between the posts, newly erected, of old Cahokia's astronomical circle.

THE St. Louis operas performed this year, besides "The Devil and Kate," were "Figaro," Britten's "Peter Grimes," and Donizetti's "Daughter of the Regiment." "Peter Grimes," which was first performed in 1945, has proved to have lasting power, and is perhaps the most moving of modern operas. The St. Louis performance, which was directed by Colin Graham, was hectic, overemphatic—and a knockout. Kenneth Kiesler, conducting, drove the score hard and often too fast. Martin Thompson, singing accurately and strongly, played the protagonist from the start as a violent, dangerous lunatic. (If I read the stage action rightly, this Grimes caused his apprentice's death by impatiently loosening the rope down which the boy was descending.) Christine Brewer, the Ellen Orford, allowed her voice to become steely when it rose. Several of the Sea Interludes were mimed. In "Storm," a corps of writhing Furies assailed Grimes; Ellen, at the "What harbour shelters peace" theme, appeared as the possible savior; and then the dead boy rose between them. "Sunday Morning" was turned into a procession to church animated by fussy little "cameos" of chorister activity. The Passacaglia became a scene-setting ritual, with the chorus marching round and round in a circle. (The imagery of village invasion into Grimes' privacy, and of that privacy's fragile independence of village mores, made its point but lessened the impact of the real, physical invasion, later in the scene, that Britten composed.) The St. Louis theatre has a thrust stage and no front curtain: making a virtue of necessity, Mr. Graham aimed at clothing the scene-change interludes with significant action, but he gave them too much scenic emphasis. Modern directors are reluctant to allow a composer to set a scene and continue the drama, for a while, through music alone. Modern, pantomime-watching audiences—eyes alerted, ears deaf and tongues ready to wag while there is not something to watch—may per-

haps never learn the special significance and eloquence of the Sea Interludes in "Grimes," of Siegfried's Rhine Journey and Funeral March, of the "Pelléas and Mélisande" interludes, of the "Wozzeck" D-minor interlude. ("Pelléas" and "Wozzeck" are two operas overdue in St. Louis.)

Nevertheless, this "Grimes" made a great effect. Its faults were those of overemphasis, of passionate concern about the work, of hitting too hard. It was exciting to hear a small-house performance: the orchestral and choral forces were roughly those of the Sadler's Wells première. The chorus, trained by Donald Palumbo, sang with violence, accuracy, and force; its tone depended more on vehemence and loudness than on the precise tuning and expressive colors, irrespective of volume, that Reginald Goodall, who conducted the first performance of "Grimes," instilled in 1945. This was, as I said, a knockout show, even while it left questions unanswered and set its protagonist flailing through his mad scene with a wildness, vocal and physical, that put the spectators on Mrs. Sedley's side. It was opera that elicited a response. There were admirable performances from Laura Brooks Rice (Mrs. Sedley), Harlan Foss (Balstrode), Matthew Lord (Bob Boles), and Richard Rebilas (Ned Keene).

DONIZETTI's pretty "Fille du Régiment"—a work of no consequence but one that Mendelssohn, on hearing it slighted, declared he would be happy to have written—had an engaging performance. Tracy Dahl whacked her way through the title role with hoydenish spunk rather than the dainty charm that the accounts of Jenny Lind and Patti performances suggest. Her confidence, her high spirits, and her fleet if at times strident coloratura carried the day. Tonio was Stanford Olsen, a Met Mozart and Rossini tenor, whom if he were not already of known merit we could hail as a St. Louis discovery for his winning way with words and phrases and his clear, unforced tone. He should perhaps lose weight—provided he can do so without losing voice—if he wants to become an international star. As the Marquise (a role created, in 1840, by Nadia Boulanger's grandmother), Elaine Bonazzi, an intelligent and witty artist, was entertaining. Richard Isackes, the

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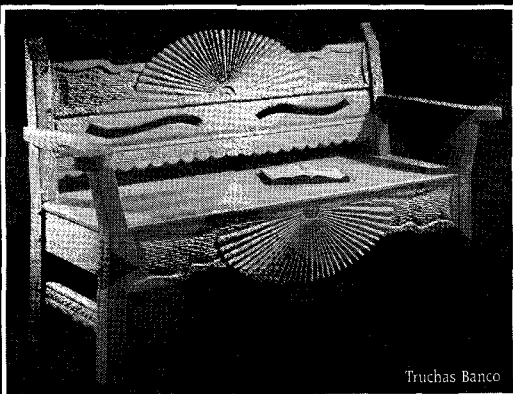
Diane Ackerman's writing often appears in *The New Yorker*

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designer, brought the action forward into a late-nineteenth-century Tyrolian valley traversed, with amusing trick perspectives, by a toy train. Michael Albano directed. Stephen Lord conducted, intent more on energy than on grace. But it all looked good and moved well.

"FIGARO" was done largely, not wholly, in my English translation but entirely without my participation, so let that not disbar me from praising Thomas Lynch's handsome scenes and a production, by Stephen Wadsworth, that was excellently earnest for three acts but fell to pieces in the fourth: the Count's repeated "Contessa, perdona" ("My Countess, forgive me; Rosina, forgive me") moved the audience to mirth. The memorable performer was the Susanna, Rebecca Abram: a soprano possessed of a delightful stage presence if small vocal control. She radiated such charm that one warmed to her and felt that if she can school an unruly but not unpromising voice she might become fully what already she embodied, a bewitching Susanna of our day.

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BOOKS

The Virtues of Playing Cricket on the Village Green

AS novelists sometimes comfort themselves by marrying other novelists, filling adjoining rooms with the hesitant clatter of two typewriters, critics can marry critics. Think of the Trillings. Think of Edmund Wilson and Mary McCarthy. Queenie (not a nickname) Dorothy Roth, born in 1906, was a literary adept before she married F. R. Leavis, in 1929, and she continued on her own, though in striking harmony with her celebrated husband's convictions and crotchets, to practice the critic's art, at the lecterns of Cambridge University and in the pages of his influential quarterly journal *Scrutiny*. Since the death of Q. D. Leavis, in 1981, Cambridge University Press has been assembling a three-volume collection of her essays, published and unpublished; the collection has been recently completed, and the second volume, "The American Novel and Reflections on the European Novel" (edited by G. Singh; \$34.95), especially recommends itself to our attention. Though not so frantic in style or pugnacious in homage as D. H. Lawrence's "Studies in Classic American Literature," Mrs. Leavis's observations have the same value, for those of us who dwell among the trees, of seeing the forest. The Americans and the English share a language and a long historical interaction, but their literatures indicate a difference between them as great as that between Hawthorne and Trollope, or between "Moby Dick" and "Middlemarch." Mrs. Leavis was, like her husband, one of that vanishing breed of critics who can feel they have read all the novels that matter—who have been enough saturated in the all too copious genre of prose fiction to make brisk and authoritative assertions that cover the field and, in the guise of literary criticism, characterize whole nations. Whereas her husband organized his bold assertions into a number of book-length studies of poetry and fiction which systematically distinguished the sheep from the goats, Mrs. Leavis's

opinions must be gathered piecemeal, from reviews and essays and lectures she did not bother to collect or, in the case of eight of the fourteen pieces in this volume, to publish in any form.

G. Singh, a professor of Italian language and literature at the Queen's University in Belfast, and a friend of the Leavises, is to be thanked for seeing these specimens of her acute and spirited criticism into print. He is to be chastised, however, for the "minimal editing" (his phrase) that has left her hitherto unpublished lectures so full of erratic punctuation and grammar, with many run-on sentences and a few virtually inscrutable ones:

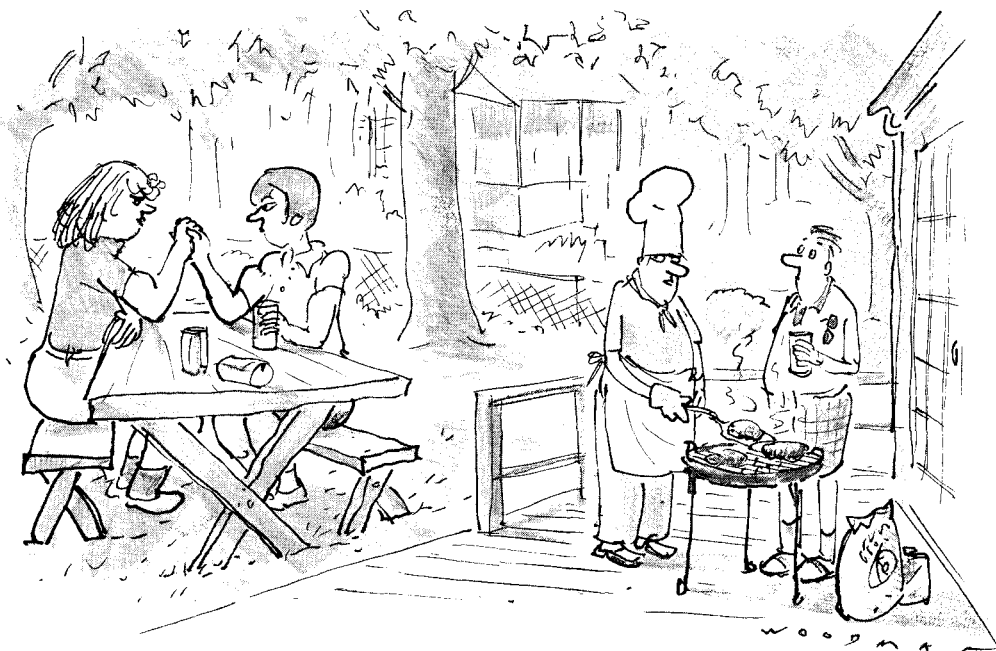
Yet it is this social life which James had elected to share, evidently not without psychological strain, as a work that approaching never to perfection, yet does not strike cold.

I would suggest that it is James's sense of not being on sure ground and his lack of any deeper knowledge of and response to the whole English subject than aesthetic or prejudiced that makes him so prone to make use of other novelists, truly English novelists, to provide a scaffolding from which to work or a framework within which to construct with a difference.

A more merciful editor, surely, would have silently corrected Mrs. Leavis's spelling "Nabakov" to "Nabokov," added the omitted definite articles to the titles she cites as "Grapes of Wrath"

and "Cancer Ward," given the post-Civil War epoch of American culture that she terms "the Gold Age" its usual name, "the Gilded Age," restored William Dean Howells' own title, "A Hazard of New Fortunes," to the novel that she with misplaced uxoriousness calls "A Husband of New Fortunes," and rectified the egregious misquotation of Huck Finn's pivotal declaration "All right, then, I'll go to hell" as the nonsensical "All right then, I'll go to hide." Professor Singh might also, editorial minimalist though he is, have considered deleting the sentence (concerning Henry James) "He tried and often succeeded in doing his duty as a novelist" one of the two times it appears, in identical form, in the same essay.

In 1980, Professor Singh persuaded Mrs. Leavis to come to Belfast and perform the herculean task of giving, during a one-week stay, "five lectures—one each on the English, the American, the Anglo-Irish, the French, the Russian and the Italian tradition of the novel." I count six lectures there, but in any case it was a huge assignment, which, though she was a few months short of her death, she performed heroically, with a lavish dispersal of provocative ideas. The French, Russian, and Italian lectures close this volume, and the American one begins it, de-



"Are they at it again?"

scribing a complex cultural situation with a bracing simplicity:

I see the American novel as resulting from two conditions. The first is the reaction of a former colony having emancipated itself successfully by war from the mother-country, determined to show it then stood on its own feet culturally as well as politically. . . . The second condition which gave the American novel its unique character was the naïve *Utopian* theory on which their settlement of the new continent was originally based. . . . Hence the American novelist was characteristically both a patriot and a dissident and the failure to achieve the intended (moral and spiritual) goal could not be blamed on the English, but, as these writers recognized, was innate, owing to the facts of human nature. Hence a radical bitterness from loss of faith in man characterized the American novel from its early days and up to the present day, so that its prevailing and indeed inevitable style has always been ironic—ironic not only in tone but in essential structure.

Without quite knowing what an ironic structure is, this American reader can feel in his Utopian bones the justice of that supposed “radical bitterness” generated by a background of unreal expectation, a bitterness to be felt behind the tortuous verbal churning of Faulkner as well as beneath Hemingway’s surface of taut facticity—a naïve, unending surprise and indignation that life is as it is. We cannot, unlike the Europeans, quite get over it.

Our two opposed attitudes toward the Old World are epitomized by men called Henry James: the father scorned the English as “an intensely vulgar race, high and low,” and wrote that “American disorder is sweet beside European order: it is so full of promise,” while the son found an artistic life impossible to live in America and settled in England. Eight of Mrs. Leavis’s essays touch on James, and, composed over a span of thirty years, they vary in degree of admiration. He saw his duty and frequently did it, we are twice assured, and the essay lengthily titled “The Fox Is the Novelist’s Idea: Henry James and the House Beautiful” concludes in the tone of a guest tersely thanking his host after a quarrelsome evening: “In his *Notebooks* he exhorted himself ‘Be an artist, be distinguished, to the last.’ And I must say, I think it evident that he was.” Yet Mrs. Leavis, despite the affection with which she recalls reading her first Henry James as a girl, paints a rather devastating portrait, of a foreigner in England who “was largely dependent

on English literature for his usable knowledge of the English people,” who as “an American novelist peculiarly dependent on Old World novelists for techniques, themes and patterns” borrowed wholesale and wrong-headedly from Trollope and George Eliot, and who through the decades of exile lost his ear for American speech:

As regards language, the novelist’s essential medium, we can see (as James apparently never did) that instead of having an advantage in having two closely related languages at his disposal he hadn’t a really sensitive mastery of spoken English, while his native ear for American, at first so fine and sharp, gradually dulled, so that later American heroines like Maggie and Milly speak insipidly.

Further, James was not, as Americans see him, an Anglophile and imitation Englishman but—in line with his father’s patriotic views and his Irish grandmother’s animus—anti-British. “James’s accounts of the English gentry, while becoming increasingly confident, are always hostile and external, and they are used for propaganda. His English lords and gentlemen are satisfyingly cut down to less than American size.” James is “susceptible” to the charms of English country houses; however, “he sees them as beautifully desirable but in degenerate or unworthy hands. This is what makes it all right for them to be taken over by American money.” His well-known short story “The Real Thing,” generally understood to concern the paradoxical relation of art to reality, seems to Mrs. Leavis full of “anti-English hostility,” vented when the American painter-hero “brutally” turns his two models, Major and Mrs. Monarch, “out to starve” even though “there is almost nothing to be said against [them] except that they are upper-class English.” Their evident virtues, as she sees them—their “dignity in humiliating circumstances,” their “touching magnanimity to the Cockney female model”—do not placate their creator’s “uncertain and sometimes unmanageable anti-British drives,” which hopelessly blind him to the fine balances and shadings of “the whole English subject.”

It is a pretty picture that Mrs. Leavis paints of the eighteenth-century English society in which the English novel developed:

It was a very fluid society where the middle class, unlike Germany and other

European countries, constantly married into or otherwise rose into the aristocracy and where the younger brothers of aristocratic families were traditionally, ever since the Middle Ages, able to enter all professions and become merchants, without incurring social disability, and where the landowners traditionally lived on their estates for most of the year and in contact with their tenants of all grades, making local communities centring on the great house and parsonage complex, ideal for a novelist needing a microcosm of society for his purposes. But this was the English system.

Needless to say, “this inter-penetration of classes in England was a great asset to the novelist,” and the established Protestantism added to interpenetration “the compassion for the underdogs so unfailing in Fielding’s novels, as later in Dickens’s and George Eliot’s.” Mrs. Leavis waxes panegyric: “One sees why England, where the squire played cricket on the village green with his tenants, the blacksmith and the villagers, was the envy and astonishment of Europe.” In contrast to the French—whose novels were aristocratic in origin and remained locked into “spiritually desiccating” studies of amorous psychology and thorough disillusion—the British in their novels, of which her favorite instance is “*Middlemarch*,” took as their province “a society revealed from top to bottom and all characters shown as mutually dependent and as affected by the rest, and all equally seen with respect and compassion.” Whereas even “*Stendhal*’s great novel, *Le Rouge et le Noir*, is utterly unEnglish in its absence of respect for social order and in being without any idealistic weakness for human nature or natural ties.”

While this vision of a peaceable kingdom where the squire and the blacksmith play cricket together may seem rather rosy to those who are still struck by England’s ineluctable stratifications and class antagonisms (which Thatcherism has done little to assuage), Mrs. Leavis does confront the central issue, in fiction, of accessibility. The class-bound British fiction writer would appear to have imaginative access to a broader, livelier range of human types than his democratic American rival. Hawthorne, the first of our writers resoundingly to strike the oddly hollow American note—the first to make apparent in the quality of his imagination that an American is not simply an Englishman on another continent—gave the case an indelible phrasing in a letter to his publisher,



James Fields, in 1860, on the eve of the publication of his last novel, "The Marble Faun." As he nears the end of his distinguished yet rather crepuscular career, Hawthorne makes the piquant observation that he is not really a popular writer. "Possibly I may (or may not) deserve something better than popularity; but looking at all my productions, and especially this latter one with a cold or critical eye, I can see that they do not make their appeal to the popular mind. It is odd enough, moreover, that my own individual taste is for quite another class of works than those which I myself am able to write." So a disconnection is observed between the artist as himself part of the populace and what he is able in good conscience to produce. No such disconnection yet exists in England, apparently, for Hawthorne goes on, illustrating the "quite another class," to ask Fields, "Have you ever read the novels of Anthony Trollope? They precisely suit my taste; solid and substantial, written on the strength of beef and through the inspiration of ale, and just as real as if some giant had hewn a great lump out of the earth and put it under a glass case with all its inhabitants going about their daily business, and not suspecting that they were made a show of."

This memorable and gracious confession of artistic envy is as penetratingly diagnostic of the American imagination as the oft-quoted sentences Melville wrote, a decade earlier, in Hawthorne's praise: "He says NO! in thunder; but the Devil himself cannot make him say yes" and "Certain it is, however, that this great power of blackness in him derives its force from its appeals to that Calvinistic sense of Innate Depravity and Original Sin, from whose visitations, in some shape or other, no deeply thinking mind is always and wholly free." Almost in spite of himself, Hawthorne was a seminal author. Melville likened him to Shakespeare and from his example took the courage to revise "Moby Dick" with a new reach of ambition. Hawthorne—his flowing, delicate, ironical style, his tendency to work on the edge of allegory—was never far from the mind of Henry James, as a father to surpass. Hawthorne's fantastications, by way of the homage and emulation of Jorge Luis Borges, have even helped liberate Latin Americans into magic realism, unlocking thereby the colorful inner demons of the New

World's southern half. It was Hawthorne who began in artistic earnest to investigate our peculiar American gift for unhappiness, and Mrs. Leavis points out that he was, in his investigation, a realist and a historian:

Hawthorne's sense of being part of the contemporary America could be expressed only in concern for its evolution—he needed to see how it had come about, and by discovering what America had, culturally speaking, started from and with, to find what choices had faced his countrymen and what they had had to sacrifice in order to create that distinctive 'organic whole.' . . . He prepared himself for the task by study, though Providence had furnished him with an eminently usable private Past, in the history of his own family, which epitomized the earlier phases of New England history; this vividly stylized the social history of Colonial America, provided him with a personal mythology, and gave him an emotional stake in the past, a private key to tradition.

By her lights, even the slightest of his sketches of the Colonial past have a certain intensity, a guilty searchingness, and more rounded and imaginative accounts like "The May-Pole of Merry Mount," "Young Goodman Brown," and "My Kinsman, Major Molineux" have a definite majesty; she compares "Young Goodman Brown" favorably with Coleridge's "The Ancient Mariner" and the "Walpurgisnacht scene in Joyce's *Ulysses*, which smells of the case-book and the midnight oil." In her fondness for Hawthorne's historical stories, with their own smell of archival must, Mrs. Leavis ignores a number of, to my taste, more compelling and less parochial tales, such as "The Birthmark" and "Rappaccini's Daughter."

The peculiarities of the Puritan inheritance—its forcible habit of introspection and its suspicion of worldly pleasures—drove our seminal novelist to poetry, and weakened him for Trollopean earth-hewing. "Declining to be, perhaps incapable of being, a naturalistic novelist, he was true to his best perceptions of his genius when he did the work of a dramatic poet," Mrs. Leavis states. She quotes Henry James: "Hawthorne is perpetually looking for images which shall place themselves in picturesque correspondence with the spiritual facts with which he is concerned, and of course the search is of the very essence of poetry." But James, too, in the era of Zola and Howells, was by temperament condemned to the subtle search for such correspondences; another critic is chastised for failing his

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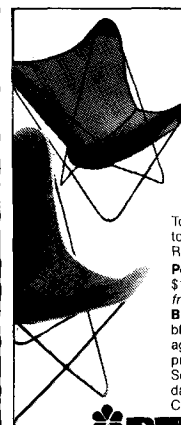


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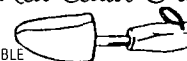
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"duty" (a frequent word with Mrs. Leavis) to "warn the innocent reader off any attempt to take James as a naturalistic novelist." His novels are "in a tradition of medieval and Elizabethan drama transmitted through Shakespeare, Ben Jonson and Bunyan (and so Hawthorne)."

Indeed, it would seem that the nineteenth century saw a general poeticizing of prose fiction; Mrs. Leavis cites a passage from "Middlemarch" as "the example I should choose to illustrate what we mean by declaring that in the nineteenth century the novel took over the function of poetic drama." In another essay she tells us:

While the novels of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with a few exceptions, were descended from Addison and Defoe, with some admixture of a debased stage comedy, there is quite another kind of novel, created by Emily Brontë, Melville, Conrad and Henry James, among others, which makes use of the technique of the dramatic poem.

We are approaching, in such judgments, the question "What is poetry?" For if Defoe's image of Robinson Crusoe on his island, with his umbrella made of animal skins (with "the hair upwards"), finding Friday's footprint on the sand isn't poetic, what is? And what novel goes further in the direction of the purely verbal than Sterne's "Tristram Shandy"? Yet there does appear to have been a basic slow displacement of energy from one genre to the other. Browning was the last poet to write dramatic poems, with characters and dialogue and a plot, to major effect. In discussions of the poeticism and insubstantiality of the American novel, Trollope is usually named as the foil; the greater figure of Dickens is left out of account, perhaps because he is too much of a poet, with an extravagance and surrealism almost American.

Mrs. Leavis's willingness to read a novel as a poem, in the image-by-image New Criticism fashion, and to cheerfully allow Americans their cultural deficiencies leads her to overvalue, I think, Melville's "The Confidence Man" and, to a degree, all the products of his last gasp as a publishing writer, in the mid-eighteen-fifties:

To the modern English and American reader, well trained in practical criticism and knowing with regard to myth, symbol, allegory and imagery, the writings of the great 1853-6 phase are of more interest than the earlier novels, evidently more accomplished as art, more varied . . . and are

noticeably more condensed, controlled and mature than either *Moby Dick* or *Pierre*.

The pairing of Melville's acknowledged masterpiece with his most abject failure is curious, and curiously still her implicit belief that breaking down "The Confidence Man" into its allegorical parts and apparent intentions will make it run. Training in "practical criticism" does not overrule, in the reading experience, readerly sensations of suspense, coherence, *jouissance*, and recognition, and Melville's "Confidence Man"—all the more poignantly for those acquainted with the youthful exuberance of "Typee" and the irresistible virtuosity of "Moby Dick"—is painful to read: crabbed in style, misanthropic in sentiment, arthritic and repetitious in movement, the work of a formidable writer on the edge of breakdown. Mrs. Leavis, fond of categorical statement and eager to find in fiction an "idealistic weakness for human nature," sometimes brushes past that elusive but essential something, that sense of music, of voice, of phrase-by-phrase unexpectedness, of constantly retuned attentiveness, which makes some texts wine and whose absence leaves others watery. Where she does settle to a text, as to the George Eliot passage mentioned, she can be thrilling, in explication and appreciation.

What thrilled us about her husband's dicta, in the easy-to-thrill fifties, was his regal power of vast exclusion. "The great English novelists," his "The Great Tradition" begins, "are Jane Austen, George Eliot, Henry James and Joseph Conrad." Fielding, Richardson, Sterne, Thackeray, Dickens, Trollope, the Brontës, Meredith, Hardy, Joyce, Virginia Woolf—all excluded. It was thrilling to think that somewhere a principle of exclusion so decisive existed, that standards so exalted were being somehow maintained. In exactly what quality virtue so stingily distributed resided remained a bit general, a bit stiff-sounding: "the realized concreteness that speaks for itself and *enacts* its moral significance," Leavis said. His wife, in her slightly less unbending criticism, offers clues to the Leavite principle nowhere more emphatically than in the last piece in this collection, "The Italian Novel."

The Italian novel, to be frank about it, won't do at all. Manzoni's "I Promessi Sposi," generally considered Italian fiction's first classic, "belongs to

the infancy of art." It is a historical romance, but "the romanticism does not get, as in Scott's better novels, a corrective in realistic sociological analysis." It "really tells us nothing about Italy" in the course of a "picturesque melodrama with a happy ending provided by Providence and not achieved logically by events." Giuseppe di Lam-pedusa, whose novel of 1960, "The Leopard," was much admired, "spent goodness knows how many years on his one novel but he never even unified it in style and tone, much less integrated the parts." He is a poor Proust spinoff, "a willing victim of nostalgia." Svevo: "It is hard to understand Joyce's enthusiasm for Svevo," who, though more Austrian than Italian in feeling, "has none of the intellectual and imaginative power of Mann or Kafka" and, though dissatisfied with the petit-bourgeois life he portrays, shows "no imaginative grasp of any other kind of life." Most interestingly: "His Freudian pre-occupation is a disability rather than a strength or a help—for psychoanalysis is inevitably reductive." Moravia is a mere compiler of "clinical accounts of sexual experience, pathological rather than pornographic." And so on, except for Verga, who writes about peasants without sentimentalizing them, in the way of George Sand and Tolstoy, and who in some novels, at least, is "possessed by a genuine sense of the tragic nature of the life of the poverty-stricken South of Italy." Like the French, the Italians tend to be raised as Roman Catholics, and "having lost religious faith they have no positives, other than the hope that once lay, apparently, in Communism, soon lost by novelists like Silone and Vittorini." To make matters worse, Italians go to too much opera: "One concludes the frequentation of opera as a national entertainment is inimical to the effort of grappling with and possessing a serious novel." Another handicap is a national incapacity, noticed long ago by Stendhal, for moral reflection: "No one who reads Italian fiction of any period can fail to notice this absence of conscience or awareness of moral values, in the characters. It makes Italian fiction less interesting than that of every other country I know, giving its novels characteristically a heartlessness and meaninglessness that only the exceptional Italian writer avoids." As if all this weren't bad enough, in modern times Italian writers have read and



even, in the cases of Vittorini and Pavese, translated "the American novelists who had such an unfortunate effect on post-war Italian writers . . . whose coarseness and crudity and their simplification of people and issues and brutalizing cult of violence made them undesirable and misleading models." Oh dear! No, what is needed is not Roman Catholicism and opera and American fiction but "firmly human values and outward-going sympathies."

Mrs. Leavis asserts, in connection with Edith Wharton, that a complete writer must offer something "in the way of positives." Failure to do more than complain prevents Wharton from being, for all her talent, a great novelist like Jane Austen or George Eliot:

She has none of that natural piety, that richness of feeling and sense of a moral order, of experience as a process of growth, in which George Eliot's local criticisms are embedded and which give the latter her large stature. Between her [Wharton's] conviction that the new society she grew up into was vicious and insecurely based on an ill-used working class and her conviction that her inherited mode of living represented a dead-end, she could find no foundation to build on.

And where does one find such a foundation? Presumably by playing cricket with the blacksmith or, if one is a blacksmith, with the squire. "The American Novel and Reflections on the European Novel" ends on a lofty admonitory note: "Unless men and women are capable of relationships which include loyalty, confidence, mutual interests, and there are people of integrity who can act disinterestedly sometimes, which of course requires courage and faith—people, in short, capable of respect for themselves and each other, I don't see how one can expect that novels worth consideration could be written."

Mrs. Leavis does not entertain the possibility that even in a world thoroughly unrelational and debased novels might still be written, describing conditions. Or that authenticity in rendering the actual condition of mankind is the sine qua non; without it, fiction becomes mere escapism, mere castle-building in air. She devotes a page to Camus's "L'Étranger," complaining that the hero, Meursault, "has no feeling for his mother" (not quite the case, actually) and that "he refuses to admit that love is more than sex or that religion and morality are real." Well, does this disqualify him from being a character in a novel? Suppose religion

and morality, conventionally understood, are not real to the novelist, or are real, as for young Camus, only in the moral stand that abstention from false pretense involves? Mrs. Leavis claims, "Meursault's quarrel is really with the conditions for living as a human being anywhere and at any time." Insofar as Meursault is condemned to death by society in the novel, "L'Étranger" does acknowledge the coercive power of a social consensus, and insofar as the novel is a child of Western bourgeois culture it may be true that where that culture dissolves or has never penetrated the novel cannot be found. But to elevate its satisfying forms into an argument for social order and human decency (as the critic understands them) is to ask the cart to drag the horse.

What is "moral"? The Leavises' pet word derives from the same Latin root as "mores"—*mos*, meaning "custom." Much of what we call moral is merely customary. Customs and convictions change; respectable people are the last to know, or to admit, the change, and the ones most offended by fresh reflections of the facts in the mirror of art. Hawthorne and Camus both presented stripped-down prose forms to do justice to the diminished worlds they saw around them and felt within themselves. "Middlemarch" was situated, we might notice, in an English era when the author was a child, so that a sense of "experience as a process of growth" could be readily grafted upon nostalgia; the author is exultantly "on top of" her material, lavishing upon it an affection and analytical zeal the novel will scarcely see again until Proust. However much we admire "Middlemarch," it cannot be written again, with the same residue of moral passion. As Borges showed with "Don Quixote," the same words wouldn't have the same meaning. Q. D. Leavis, with her engaging and invigorating desire to read a positive humanism into the novel, seems to ask that this art form exempt itself from the negative and desolating effects of the modern age and thus surrender its right to bear witness.

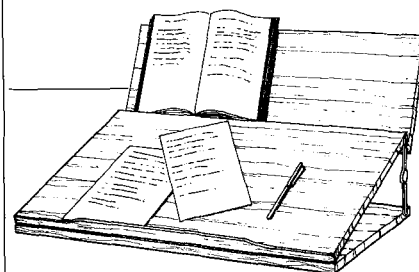
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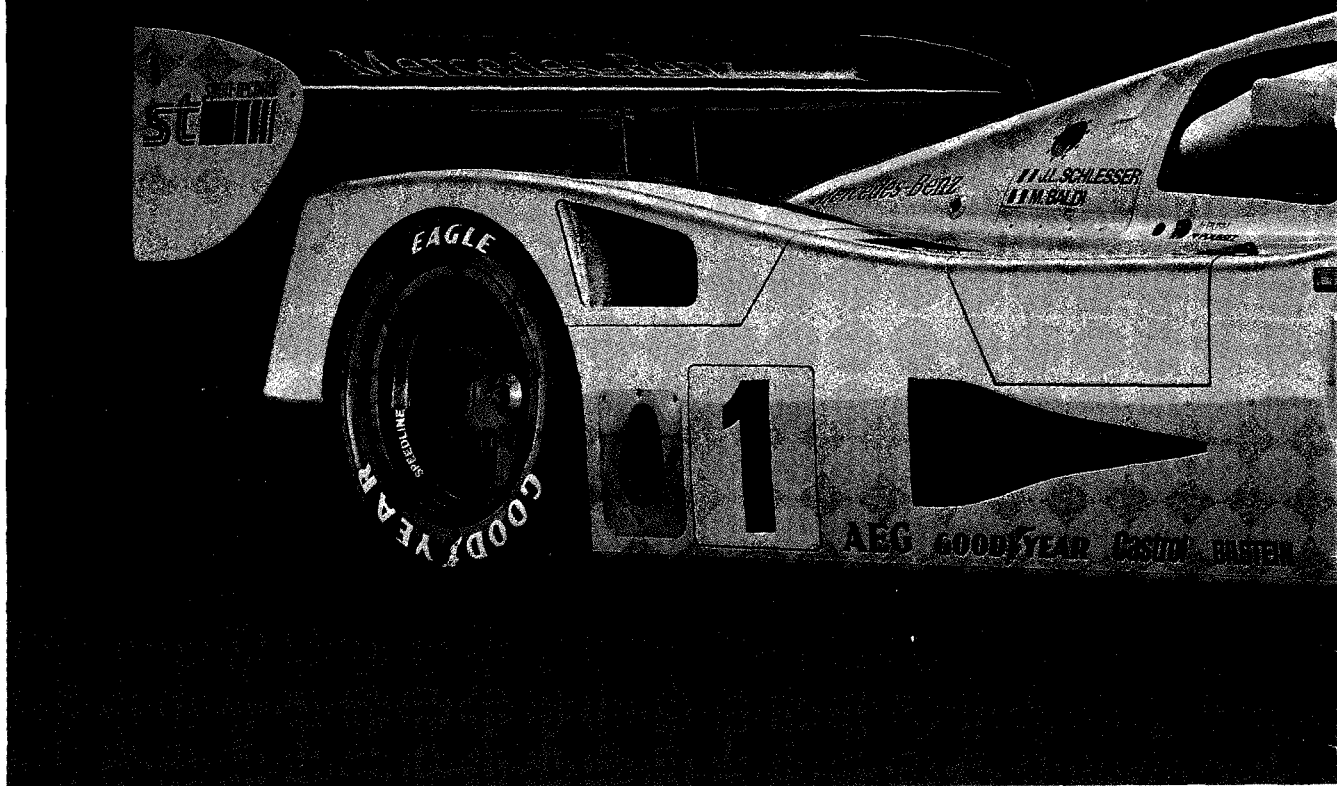


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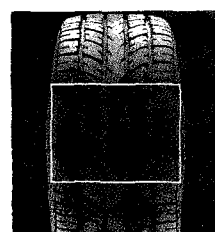
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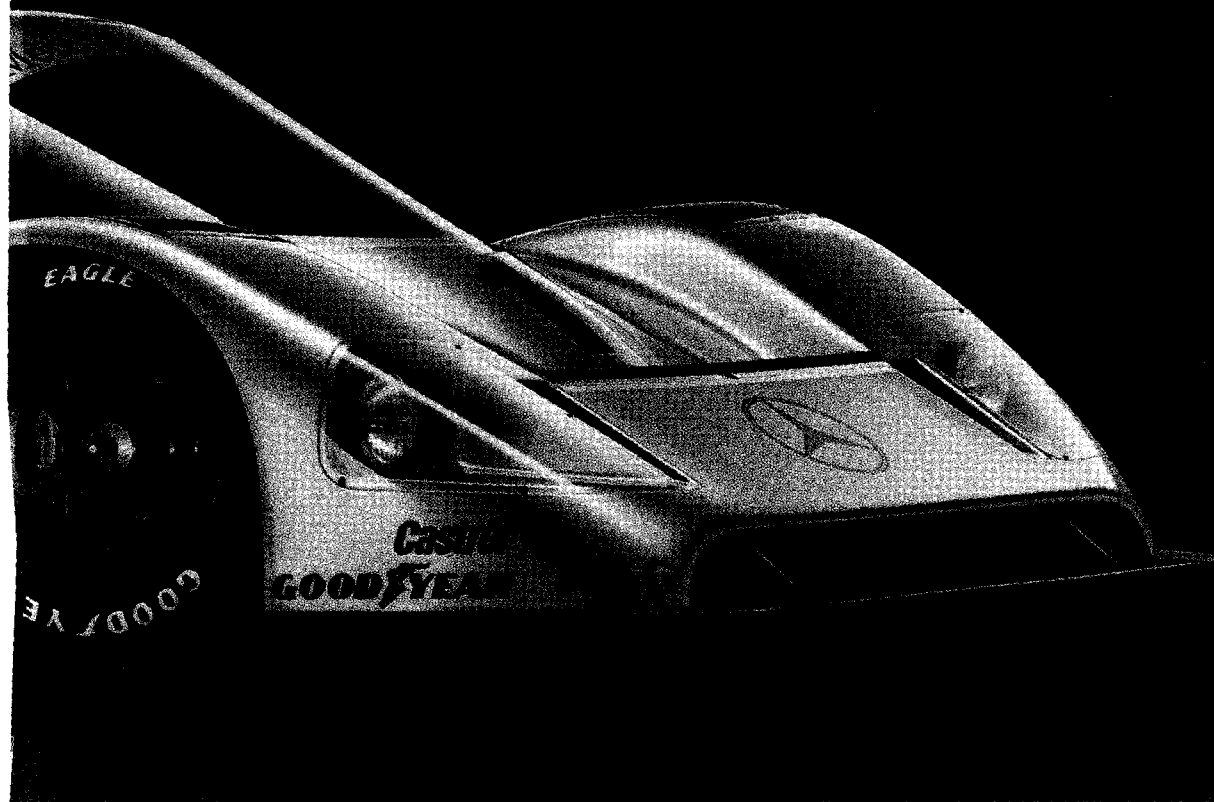
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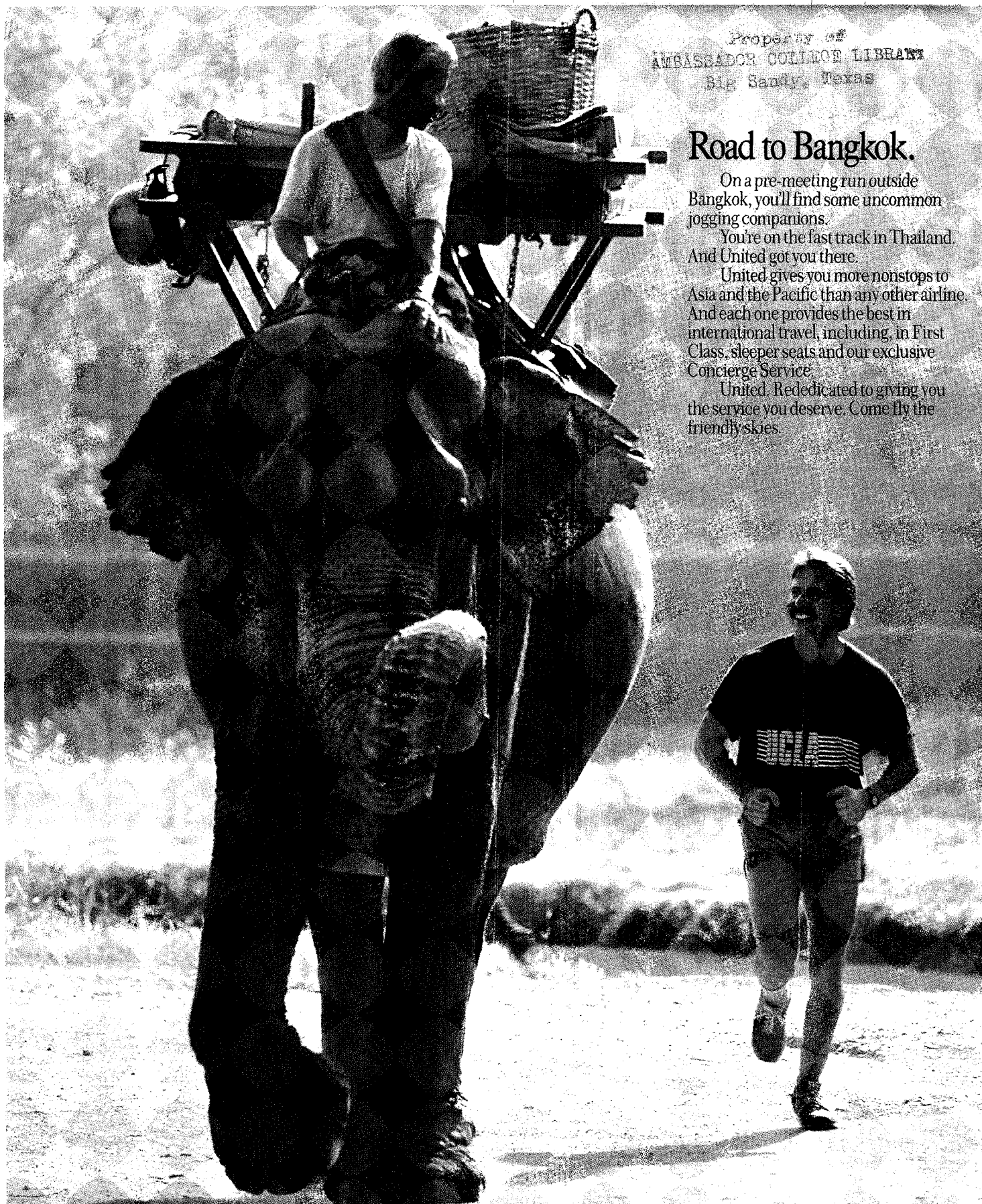
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